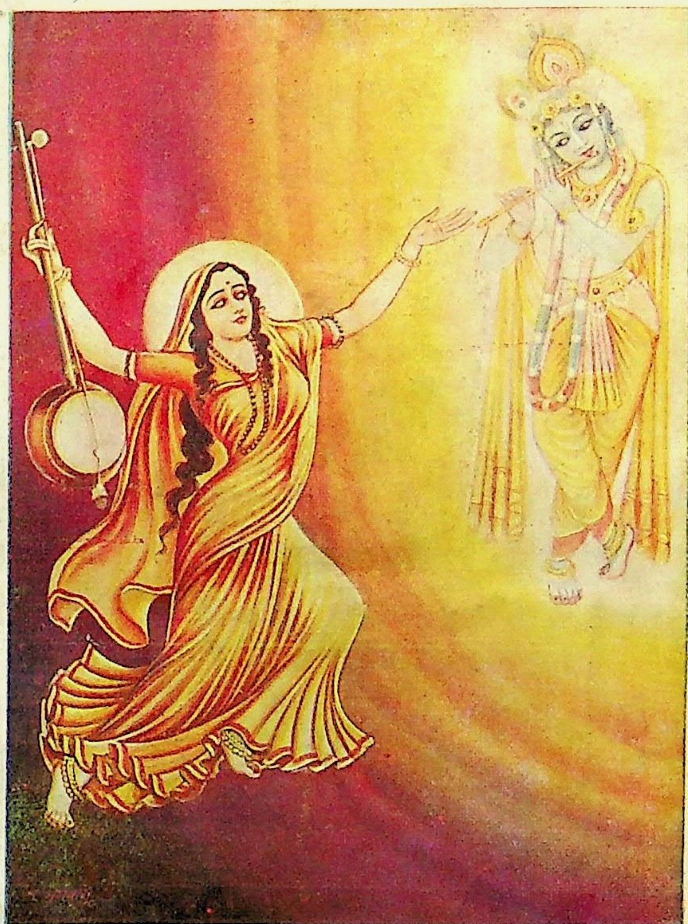
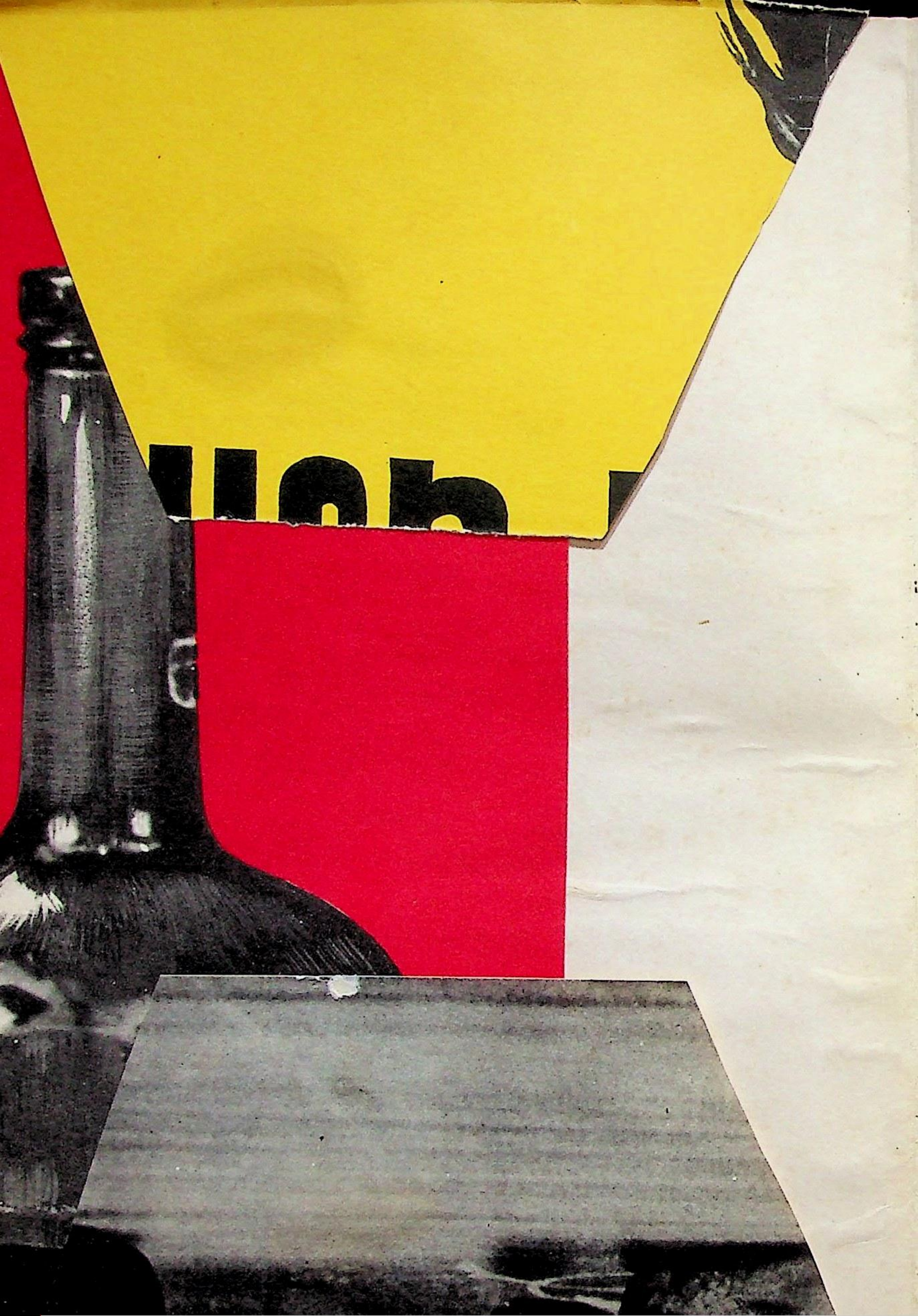
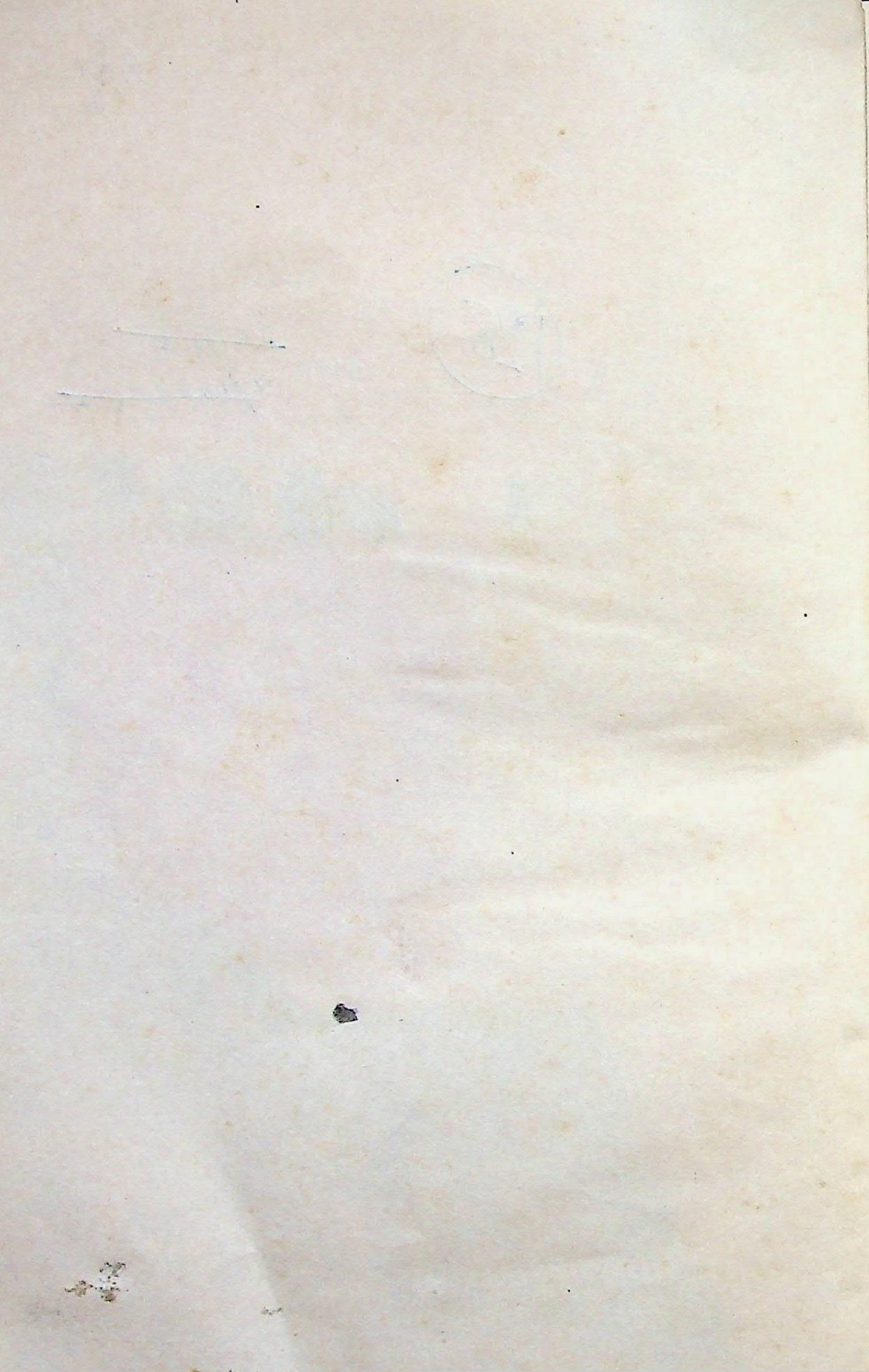
Bhagwad-Gita
19 Talks

प्रेम-मतवाली मीराँ



पग बाँध घुँघरु मीराँ नाची रे।





THE

BHAGAVAD GĪTĀ

in nineteen talks

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Swami Dayananda



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THE BHAGAVAD GITA IN NINETEEN TALKS

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Preface

These nineteen talks were delivered by Sri Swamiji at the 19-day Gitā Mahā Yagna held in Bombay in January–February 1978. The teaching of the entire Bhagavad Gitā were unravelled in a series of continuous discourses. They were well received, and were taped by Brahmacāris of Sandeepany Sadhanalaya for use in the classroom. As there was demand from the audience for the text of the talks, it was felt that the tapes should be published in print. Accordingly, the talks were transcribed from the tapes by Brahmacāris and slightly condensed for the sake of readability. Sri Swamiji, who went through the original draft, found it by and large in conformity with the substance of the talks. Thus the contents of this book reflects the spirit of the original talks. We feel that it would be of great help to the reader in understanding the essence of the teaching of the Bhagavad Gitā.

PUBLISHERS

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The Problem of Man

FREEDOM OF CHOICE—CONFLICTS

The human mind is a battlefield because there are conflicts, constant conflicts. A conflict is possible only where a choice is possible. Animals have no conflicts whatsoever. The cow has no conflicts like, "Should I be a vegetarian or non-vegetarian ; should I do this or not ?" They live their own life governed by their own pattern of instincts. They have no choice. To choose is the privilege of the human. When there are things to choose from, there arise conflicts, such as, what to avoid ; what to choose or do ; whether to be or not to be, and so on. Unlike man, a dog, however unfortunate it is, being hurt by urchins, will have no conflicts, such as, whether to sit and suffer or die, as it has no choice. Man has to pause each time because every moment he is at crossroads ; he cannot walk on both roads. Moment to moment there is an experience, it unfolds for him a choice: should he do this or not, should he act or renounce, should he marry or not marry. Thus there are lots of conflicts. If you are an industrialist, " Should I start a plant or not, should I apply for a licence or not, should I put the plant here or elsewhere . . . ?"—this is your conflict. A housewife has the choice, "Should I cook cucumber or brinjal? " Everyone has conflicts ; his mind is a *Kurukṣetra*—battlefield.

The human mind is governed by *viveka*—discriminative ability—which makes man distinct from all other beings. This is a unique body, endowed with a mind, a mind that can be happy or unhappy, frustrated or desparate. No animal has this problem of being happy or unhappy. The faculty of the mind is given to man —that is why he is so tall among other

beings. The animal grows horizontally—its head, stomach and tail are all in one horizontal line. An animal has to satisfy only the demands of the body and not of the intellect. Man no more stands on all fours, and his head is above the shoulders; his head is not buried like an animal's, under the folds of his tummy or elsewhere. Whether man is born due to *puṇya*, or chromosomes, or due to *karma* these chromosomes made him, the fact remains that, becuase of a great blessing, he is born a human being with this unique faculty of discrimination and choice.

This blessing itself is a curse because he has conflicts. A cow does not go to a temple or a church and pray or attend a Mass: It does not seek help nor does it thank the Lord for the blessings. None has ever seen a buffalo praying in any temple! Man, on the other hand, does all this with the hope of getting some poise; for him there appears to be no poise. This is the case not only of an old man, but even for one who has barely begun to shave, who has not seen many summers.

Just ask any Indian, "How do you do?" In answer to this, he will tell you his entire life-story. Or, the typical answer may be, "Getting on", or "Pulling on", which are but translations of *Chalta hai* in Hindi. One can find the equivalent of this in all Indian languages. This does not mean an Indian alone has problems. Others know this question to be a mere formality, and do not come out with all their woes! Because you have conflicts, though due to choice, your mind is a battlefield, a *Kurukṣetra*.

The cow is only interested in food and in propagation, which are taken care of by instincts. Every being has knowledge about its food and where it is. Even a vulture knows how and where to land for food. It may fly high, but if there is a dead body it will land on the carcass. Man has all these demands plus something more which makes him a problem to himself and to others. He is a problem for others because no one can size him up to interact properly so that relations with him can be a constant and beautiful one. In the morning he is wonderful, but in the evening he is different. One day he is

very friendly, but the next day he is very inimical. He cannot brook even a small disagreement or insult. He cannot relate properly even to himself. This also makes his mind a *Kurukṣetra,* a battlefield. This problem of the mind is a human problem. It is not a problem of the modern man alone; it is an ancient problem—a problem of man.

HUMAN PROBLEMS AND *THE HUMAN PROBLEM*

This problem of man is not solved by meeting all one's wants. Even when all wants are fulfilled, he will still have conflicts. He will then wonder what he shall do next. If he has leisure, he has to find out what he can do. Man always wants something or the other. Till the conflicts are resolved, there can be no calling of truce in this inner battle of *Kurukṣetra.* In deep sleep every day one calls a truce, but once the mind is up, conflict starts again. Whether it is a dreaming mind or a wakeful mind, as long as the mind IS, conflict IS; one cannot blow the mind to solve the conflict, nor can one live with a conflict. No one can stand indecision too. By blowing the mind, getting high, the fluffy mind can become incapacitated to think, but once it regains its inherent capacity, conflicts loom large. Am I to resolve the conflict by obliterating the power of the mind, losing my grip over it and letting it revel in some imagined state, free from the realities of life? Or, am I to resolve and find a solution to this conflict? In this, a human being has no choice. If he has no idea of losing the mind, he has no choice.

The very conflict is for resolving: Human life seems to be meant for resolving conflicts. Finding food for the hungry, or a shelter for the needy, though necessary, is but a topical problem. With or without food, man will still have conflicts. If this conflict is resolved, he will be more effective in life, more capable. That man who has resolved his problems will be in a better position to find food. If he gets caught in conflict and is mentally shattered, that man will not find any food. If some agency gives him food, that is no real help. That agency should

help find a way for him to discover himself so that he can be more effective. This battlefield with conflicts, the mind, has extraordinary powers, and so the suffering also is extraordinary, not shared by the animals. Unable to bear this, a man looking at a buffalo standing in the street—totally nonreactive to all the blowing horns, like a *Mahātmā*—thinks, "Perhaps this buffalo is more blessed than I !" It is unenviable to entertain, or even have the capacity to entertain such a thought because, he is not like the animal which is completely programmed, living according to its *dharma*. One may say that a buffalo is happy because it is not conscious of itself to see that it is unhappy. It is not conscious of itself to be different from what it is; it does not want a change in itself, does not try to be a different being.

Due to the faculty of the intellect, *buddhi*, man is not only conscious of objects and the world, he is also conscious of himself. This is what marks him out; nothing else. As a being he is aware of himself, and with this self-consciousness he is aware of the world. It is the glory of man that he is conscious of himself. The self he is aware of is not a complete self, not an adequate self, not a happy self, a self free from conflicts. The self he is conscious of is unfortunately a wanting, desiring self. This problem of an inadequate self is the HUMAN PROBLEM. It is not just the problem of Arjuna, but a problem of the modern man, that of any man with a head over his shoulders. It is not just a topical problem.

The topical problems keep on changing: the morning may bring you a problem and the evening another. These are topical problems for which one cannot sit and weep, " There is no sugar; I will commit suicide." If one commits suicide for this, he is perhaps better off that way! Nobody is free from topical problems: Even great *Mahātmās* including Lord Kṛṣṇa and Vyāsa had topical problems. If such problems and challenges are not there, what a life it will be—a sheer monotony without any kicks! If one gets all that he wants, he will die of boredom. Life without challenge is no life at all. Man questioning the very presence of conflicts is like the case of the villager who complained of the miserliness on the part of a

wealthy promoter of a football game for having provided only one ball for both teams! The ball should be one and the contenders must be many; Then only there is a game.

So also with the game of living. Only if there are challenges can you get a kick out of it. For any individual or a nation there will be topical problems. These will be there all along, nobody can solve them completely. Whether it was Rāma's time or Kṛṣṇa's time, these problems were there. That I don't get a job or food is no problem; These problems can be solved if one has a mind that is awake, alive and learns with every passing experience. That is the kind of mind that one must have to properly deal with life's inevitable topical problems. This is possible only when man settles accounts with the world and others, or hopes to solve his own problems, let alone the problems of others. A psychologist can help you only if he has undergone psychoanalysis himself, so that he knows clearly the working of his own mind. Otherwise, how can he help the patient to cope with his problems? Similarly, when I feel constantly that nothing is well with me, how can I have the necessary capacity to solve problems? This wanting, inadequate self, the only self I am aware of, is like the *śruti* * in Indian music. The singer sings with his voice pitched to the *śruti* of the *tambura* † which does not change. He may bring out various melodies, but one thing is constant: the *śruti* of the *tambura*. Similarly, behind all your pursuits there is one *śruti* in your heart which goes on telling all the time, " I want . . . I want . . . I want . . . " This " I want " is behind every want. It is only a symptom of self-appreciation, appreciation of the incomplete self. Man hopes that by doing things or changing things he would be the complete self one day; he always thinks that the morrow will be better. This the human heart will not give up.

This problem of resolving or finding an adequate self is a human problem for which there should be a solution. This

* The *sruti* in Indian classical music is equivalent to the ground bass in Western classical music.

† A string instrument.

problem is inborn. I did not decide to be incomplete and feel wanting, but I find myself wanting. This is a natural problem of want, and it finds its articulation in various forms of want. Each want is but an expression of an inadequate being: This is the reason for his mind to be in conflict. Because of this, the mind, which is a platform for all undertakings, becomes a battlefield of conflicting ideas, a *Kurukṣetra.* This noise of conflict is always there. This has got to be solved. In all our searches we search only for this. This seems to be the cry of the human mind: to be free from want. He tries to be different because he can be different.

THE TWO PURSUITS OF MAN

When a man wants something, it is not the thing that he really wants. By getting the thing he wants, he hopes to be a different person. He knows he is not satisfied with himself as he is, so there is an uneasiness, a discomfort, a feeling that all is not well with him. And he cannot be a dissatisfied but happy person. Once he knows all is not well with him, he must necessarily do something about it so that things will be all right. He does exactly what others are doing, or have been doing, with small variations. He wants to be a different person so that he can be comfortable with himself. Even in a desire to get rid of something, he has a hope that he will be comfortable when this is got rid of. Thus, for want of a thing he is not comfortable, or because of a thing around him he is uncomfortable. And so there is an attempt on his part to gain something which he does not have, or get rid of something which he does not want.

Just think of all the pursuits you had in your life. You find them fall under the two categories of going after something, or getting rid of something. Going after something is called *pravṛtti*—positive pursuit; getting rid of something is called *nivṛtti*—negative pursuit. Let us say, in war the advance of the army is *pravṛtti*, and withdrawing from the enemy, called successful retreat, is *nivṛtti.* In both these pursuits man would

like to earn his comfort; for the sake of this comfort he strives in life. Behind these positive and negative pursuits is a want on his part to be comfortable with himself. None says, " Everything is well with me. I want to do this or get rid of that because I feel like doing it."

When you want to get rid of something you don't want, or when you want to acquire something you like, what is it that you want to gain by these? In one you want to get rid of discomfort, and in the other you want to gain comfort. In both you want to be at home with yourself, not uncomfortable with yourself. A person with a small pebble in his shoe, however busy he may be, has got to stop and get rid of it, so that he can be comfortable. Similarly, you seem to have some bug in your mind which bothers you. This irritation makes you strive, makes you go forward, keeps you doing something to get rid of the bug. What one does is something distinct from individual to individual: It is purely personal. You want to get rid of something, and another is ready to go in for the same thing. You want to get rid of a car, and somebody is ready to buy it. Your own values decide what you want to get rid of. What is common is that everyone wants to get or get rid of something. Things keep on changing. A thing that you wanted before may not be what you want now. What you want today you may not want tomorrow. Thus things you want may change, your desires may change, but one thing that does not change is the *śruti*, " I want . . . I want . . . . "

This is the problem of the human being. This problem is because he is conscious of himself. If this self is complete and full, he will never say, " I want." All that he does may be born of the fullness and happiness that he is, and he will do things happily. Now he does these for the sake of gaining happiness or being comfortable. In human life, what one seeks is not this or that, but only an AT-HOMENESS with oneself. This at-homeness is sought after by all. It is very strange that one is not at home with one's self: When he is at home, he wants to get out; when he is out, he wants to go home. This lack of at-homeness drives the mind crazy. You cannot stand

this mind. If you don't know how to solve the problem, you must necessarily go in for an escape. You go in for music not because you love it, but because you want to escape from sorrow. This is true generally, if not always. In going to a movie, you want to escape from the reality of your mind. There you may find the movie to be a more eloquent tragedy, but this gives you some satisfaction that at least there are some whose lives are more tragic than yours. But your problem is not solved. There is always an attempt to escape from yourself, and nobody has ever solved any problem by escaping. This problem of my being self-conscious, conscious of a wanting self, is not going to be helped by a *pravṛtti* or *nivṛtti* activity. But any human can do only either of the two. This human problem which all of us face is presented in the *Gītā* by Arjuna. He himself does not know whether *pravṛtti* or *nivṛtti* will make him comfortable.

UNDERSTANDING THE HUMAN PROBLEM

Suppose there is a happy man who does not stir out for anything. He just sits under a tree in a forest with the sky as the ceiling and the foliage of the tree as the false ceiling. He does not want or need anything. He is ready to give want little he has, ready to feed the dog that is near him the food that was given to him. And he seems very happy. Seeing him, a man thinks, "Let me give up everything and be happy." By giving up what all he had and wearing a loincloth he walks out. But by merely doing this he does not become a wise man. Now he becomes only a miserable beggar. By his renunciation he has become a beggar materially also, whereas previously he was a beggar only in mind. He is now in a worse position: He is not happy as the wise man he saw under the tree, nor does he have the comforts he had before and the little kicks in life.

There is another type who thinks, " If I have more, I will be happy. " More is a comparative term; There is on end. There is but a more for anything one has. A man on the street

will think he will be happy if he has two square meals a day. The same one, if he gets them, will tell you, " Mere eating does not mean life. I want to achieve something which will make me happy." He will say, " I want a hut, then a flat, a house with a garden, a vehicle, scooter, then a three-wheeler car, a Fiat and then a Mercedes." Then what? still he is the same inadequate self, and so then he will roll up his sleeves and begin doing something. He would go to places he has not seen. This does not satisfy him because, wherever he goes he finds only a rearrangement of what he has already seen—trees, rivers, birds, snow, stars, sky, people. These are the same, but are only rearranged. There is no such thing as an American star. Therefore, he feels, " *Ab kyā karnā*—now what should be done? This is achieved, what next? " And this goes on endlessly. Once experienced, you are after something new. That is why new things, new games, come up. In your hair style you must be different; so you want to have an uncombed look of hair and spend more time in making it look uncombed. Whatever you may do, still the problem of the tune " I want " remains. Life seems to be lived always in want, tension and inadequacy. This is THE PROBLEM. And no one is happy being inadequate.

Man does not love inadequacy, but he loves the opposite; at least he wants to get rid of this inadequacy. In the absence of a means for finding the solution to this problem, man can escape from all of it in a sedative—sleep. In deep sleep there is no inadequacy, imperfection, problems, or limitations because man is not there, nor is the fellow with whom he can compare himself and suffer. In deep sleep there is total absence of all problems.

In the world, the only difference between the " haves and have-nots " is that the " have " is not happy in comforts, the " have-not " is unhappy without comforts. You may think the other is happy because he has comforts; this is because you have a value for what he has. Nobody is really happy. Everyone wants to be different from what he is. This is a constant problem of the human being.

Thus this problem is to be discerned in life. There is no fun in life if all the time I don't know what I am looking for. What we call fun is only a form of escapism. If it is not clear to you as to what for you are having this life, the various things you do, the pursuits you make, all these become invalid, because the original problem itself is not known, let alone solved. At this point of discussion it is absolutely necessary to know what is THE problem in one's life. One cannot be indifferent to this problem. It has got to be solved by any human heart which has got the eloquence of self-consciousness. At one time or other in life man has to discern this problem. Life's experiences make him think, "All the time what I want is not this or that, but I want to discover how to be at ease with myself, and nothing else. How can I discover this?" This gives an edge in his life because he knows exactly what he is to look for in life, and life becomes wonderful. Otherwise, it is only eating, mating, and dying. A dog need not know this because it has not got our problem! One should know what is the real purpose in life. Then alone it is worthwhile living. The *Bhagavad Gītā* solves THIS HUMAN PROBLEM.

Recently, in a conference of *Mahātmās*, a question was asked, "What can the *Gītā* do for me to solve my problems?" This is a relevant question. The *Gītā* cannot give you food or shelter; it is not meant for it. The *Gītā* pertains to solving the problem of this inadequate self because of which man suffers all the miseries. It tackles THE PROBLEM of man because of which he is unable to face the topical problems. The same fundamental problem, faced so keenly now by the modern man, has always been there: Arjuna also had this problem. Kṛṣṇa teaches Arjuna how to find the adequate self in him. This is the subject matter of the *Bhagavad Gītā*. It is not dealing with topical problems like population explosion or pollution control because IT need not deal with these. All these problems can be solved better if we solve this fundamental problem. Otherwise, while solving problems, we will create more problems! A psychiatrist should first discover his sanity before he can help the mentally sick people. A doctor who goes to a contagious

area should see that he is strong and has those armours that will protect him from the contact. Otherwise, he himself will be a problem, and others will be required to help him! This is what is happening in all the societies. That is why one finds problems in social work. It is the people of incomplete heart that go about doing political and social service. Only the one who has solved one's own problems can be of real service: Thus you cannot have service before self. How can a heart that is inadequate distribute anything to anybody else, when there is nothing good inside it? First, let one solve this problem.

THE *GĪTĀ* IS FOR YOU

The *Gītā* is not for any one man or creed or nation, but is meant for man. It is not meant for a newborn baby, nor is it meant for anybody with the mind of a baby. The *Gītā* is for a mind that has fought in life, a mind that has discovered a dissatisfaction for that wanting mind: This is needed. Thus it is for an alert thinking mind, having many conflicts! Such a mind alone can come to the *Gītā* and appreciate its message. Don't say, " I can come to the *Gītā* after solving all the problems." The more tense you are, the more fit you are for the *Gītā*. A dull mind does not ask for a change since everything is all right for that mind. The *Gītā* is for a mind like that of Arjuna, a man who had achieved a lot, and who could think and look beyond his nose. For one with such a mind, the *Gītā* has the message solving the human problem. Everybody with a head above his shoulders, who has problems, has to solve THE PROBLEM; the *Gītā* solves it, it is a promise. You have to see whether it solves it or not. I have got eighteen days to prove that it solves this problem. I will make you see that the problem is solved and, like Arjuna, you too can say, *Naṣṭo mohaḥ*—gone are my delusions." This is the assurance of the *Gītā*.

The Sorrow of Arjuna

THE HUMAN PROBLEM

Behind all pursuits of man the problem that remains unresolved is the feeling of inadequacy, a feeling of want, the continuous *śruti*, " I want , . . I want." This *śruti* has no relation to one's successes or failures in life. In the *Gītā*, Arjuna discovers this human problem while he is faced with the prospect of a fratricidal war, and goes about seeking the solution. He appreciates that his sorrow is due to the inability to solve this problem of man. He sees clearly that even if he wins the war, he would still be a wanting self. His mind thus yearns for a solution to the fundamental problem of man.

GENESIS OF THE *GĪTĀ*

Arjuna was an archer. Kṛṣṇa was his contemporary. Kṛṣṇa was born in a prison. He could not live with his own parents, and was brought up by a cowherd chief in his home, where he was one among the cowherd boys. Even as a baby he had problems: He had to vanquish a lot of people just to survive. His life was not that easy. In spite of this he proved himself to be a happy person. That is what we understand from the stories told about him in the *Mahābhārata* or the *Bhāgavata*. He was hailed as a god incarnate.

Arjuna, the prince of the Pāṇḍavas, was one of the five sons of Pāṇḍu. Pāṇḍu ruled a vast kingdom. He gave the kingdom to Dharmaputra, the eldest son. Arjuna was a born prince. His other brothers were Bhīma, Nakula, and Sahadeva. All were called Pāṇḍavas because they were born to Pāṇḍu. They had a cousin, Duryodhana, the eldest of the 100 sons of

Dhṛtarāṣṭra, the elder brother of Pāṇḍu. All of the names of the ninety-nine younger fellows save one began with *Dur*, which means evil. True to this prefix they lived. Each one of them was as evil as he could be. Duryodhana wanted the kingdom for himself. He tricked the Pāṇdavas in a game of dice—a royal sport that one was supposed to play. Dharmaputra lost everything in gambling as there was no fifty-fifty chance for him due to the evil genius of S'akuni allied with Duryodhana. According to the terms agreed, Dharmaputra and his brothers had to go to the forest along with their wife. After twelve years in the forest, plus one year spent incognito, they could return to claim their kingdom. They survived these thirteen years and came back to claim the kingdom.

Duryodhana was thus an usurper. As princes, the Pāṇdavas had a duty to set things in order. They also had a right to the kingdom. Out of sympathy for Duryodhana, and with a desire to avoid a fratricidal war, Kṛṣṇa was sent as messenger to ask for a share of the kingdom. Duryodhana was not for any compromise. Kṛṣṇa could not change him. He begged Duryodhana for half a kingdom, five taluks, or a village with five houses, or even a house with five rooms, and all were refused. Duryodhana said, "I will rule the kingdom. They have lived for thirteen years in the forest; let them go back and die there. If they really want the kingdom, let them fight. A prince does not beg; he should win me by the sword. I am ready for it. If they fight for it, they will take it only at the death of Duryodhana." All the Pāṇdavas were eager to avoid a war, but it was not possible. Due to Duryodhana, war was declared. Only a few who were dedicated to the cause of *dharma* supported the Pāṇdavas. Kṛṣṇa was requested by Arjuna to serve him as his driver.

THE OPENING SCENE OF THE *GĪTĀ*

Dhṛtarāṣṭra is in his palace. He wants to know what happened on the battlefield. Sanjaya, the wise minister, gives the old, blind king an account of the happenings on the battle-

field. The *Gītā* begins with a question by Dhṛtarāṣṭra to Sanjaya

Dharmakṣetre kurukṣetre samavetā yuyutsavaḥ
māmakāḥ pāṇḍavāścaiva kimakurvata sanjaya. (I-1)

"O Sanjaya, assembled in the sacred land of *Kurukṣetra*, desirous to fight, what did my people and Pāṇḍavas do?"

His blindness is clearly revealed by the word *māmakāḥ* (my people) and Pāṇḍavas. The born-blind Dhṛtarāṣṭra seems to be more than just blind. He looks upon them as Pāṇḍavas, as though they are unknown entities, though Pāṇḍu was his own brother. Had he asked, " What did the Pāṇḍavas and Duryodhana do in the battlefield?", we could say that he was objective. The problem is in the word *māmakāḥ* (my people). " What did they do in *Kurukṣetra*, this *dharmakṣetra*, the sacred land of India?" In this land, where *dharma* alone is important, in this *dharma bhūmi*, only these have happened—usurping, gambling, banishing . . . culminating in the declaration of war. What can happen on the battlefield? Not an exchange of pleasantries; they have come to fight each other, armed to the teeth. Still Dhṛtarāṣṭra's hope behind this question was this—After all, the Pāṇḍavas are committed to *dharma*; the country is *dharmakṣetra*; moved by culture and values of culture, perhaps THEY would have withdrawn from the battlefield, gone back to the forest, and MY Duryodhana would have retained the kingdom without a shot.

You always want the other one to be good so that you can be benefitted by it! Dhṛtarāṣṭra's is more than just physical blindness; he wants to exploit the goodness of the Pāṇḍavas, and hence asks this question of Sanjaya. Sanjaya narrates

Dṛṣṭvā tu pāṇḍavānīkam
vyūḍham duryodhanastadā
Ācāryam upasangamya
rājā vacanamabravīt. (I-2)

Atra śūrā maheṣvāsā
bhīmārjuna samā yudhi
Yuyudhāno virāṭaśca
drupadaśca mahārathāḥ. (I-4)

"Seeing the army of the Pāṇḍavas, Duryodhana goes to his teacher, Droṇa, and introduces the important men of his army by mentioning their names and titles. He also asks him to see all of the distinguished men in the enemy's camp: the Pāṇḍavas, Virāṭa, Drupada. . . all *Mahārathas.*"

A *Mahāratha* is a commander with 11,000 archers under him. Among them is the chief, Arjuna, the one who is the object of all eyes. But then Duryodhana says to Droṇa, "Our army is equally equipped because you are with us." He had the feeling that Droṇa may not fight as Arjuna was his best disciple. In fact, he once got rid of a better disciple, Ekalavya, for the sake of Arjuna. Duryodhana had his own doubts like this. Hence the pride of place is given to Droṇa. He says

Bhavān bhīṣmaśca karṇaśca
kṛpaśca samitinjayaḥ
Aśvatthāmā vikarṇaśca
soumadattistathaivaca. (I-8)
Anye ca bahavaśśūrā madarthe tyakta jīvitāḥ . . . (I-9)

"You, the teacher of Arjuna, are there, Bhīṣma, Karṇa, Kṛpa are there." He does not forget to mention his son Aśvatthāmā because Droṇa has a weakness for his son—which later will be the cause of his death. Many others are there, *tyaktajīvitāḥ*, having dedicated life for my sake, having sacrificed their lives—he tells what is going to happen.

He continues

Aparyāptam tadasmākam balam bhīṣmābhirakṣitam
Paryāptam tvidameteṣām balam bhīmābhirakṣitam. (I-10)

"Our army is *aparyāptam* (insurmountable). The army commanded by Bhīma is limited; we have an edge and we will

win." Bhīṣma, Droṇa and all others blew their conches. Trumpets, martial music, clangs of weapons and noise made by various instruments used in battle, all rented the air and earth.

In this situation, on the other side also . . .

Pāncajanyam hṛṣīkeśo
devadattam dhanañjayaḥ
Pauṇdram dadhmau mahāśankham
bhīmakarmā vṛkodaraḥ. (I-15)

Kṛṣṇa blew his conch, *Pāncajanya.* Arjuna blew the *Devadatta* and Bhīma, the *Vṛkodaraḥ* (one whose belly is like that of a wolf), blew his conch, *Pauṇdra.* Later Arjuna, the furious, orders Kṛṣṇa, forgetting that the Lord of Dvāraka had obliged him by being his charioteer at his request *

* Both Arjuna and Duryodhana went to Krsna seeking his help in the war. Krsna wanted to satisfy both. He told Arjuna, "Because I saw you first, I give you a choice. Do you want me to come to you empty-handed ? I will not take up any weapons and fight. Or, do you want the army that is stationed in Dvaaraka with the supply departments to back up?" Duryodhana was thinking that he would prefer the army to an extra mouth, one more of the consuming society, during wartime ! Arjuna opted to have Krsna on his side, and Duryodhana was happy.

Arjuna also was happy. He went away with the feeling that Krsna would make all the difference between success and failure. He considered Krsna as the Lord, the *daivam.* Three factors determine the result of an action—*prayatnam* (human endeavour), *kaalam* (the time necessary), and *daivam* (the Lord). One can carry out the action, wait for the necessary time, but the third factor, the unknown factor, *daivam*, decides the success or failure. One can do *prayatnam* (work) at the proper *kaalam* (time), but still success is going to be only anybody's guess. That which makes the difference between failure and success is called the third factor, *daivam* (God). Arjuna believed in this; Duryodhana did not. Naturally, both were happy due to two types of values, visions. Arjuna did not want to lose sight of Krsna, so he begged Him to come along with him. In the chariot there are only two places; and the only seat available was that of the driver, so he asked Him to be his driver. Thus Krsna earned the name of *Paarthasaarathi*, the charioteer of *Paartha*, Arjuna. He was seated in front of him so that Arjuna could always see Him. " When the Lord is in the driver's seat, you will definitely reach the destination," this was Arjuna's thought. Therefore, he was jubilant. He felt that with his bow, *Gaandeeva*, he could destroy the enemy if only he has *daviam.*

Senayorubhayor madhye
ratham sthāpaya mecyuta. (I-21)

"O Acyuta, place my chariot between the two armies."

He forgets all this and commands Kṛṣṇa

Me ratham sthāpaya—place my chariot.

Kṛṣṇa, an obedient driver, put the chariot at the place where Arjuna could see Droṇa, Bhīṣma, Karṇa, and the rest. When Arjuna saw all of them, he realized whom he had chosen to fight against. The magnitude of the problem hit him. He thinks, "Here is Bhīṣma, on whose lap I learned the alphabet." He turned to Droṇa and saw, "Here is one from whom I learned archery." He saw his own uncle, Kṛpa. His vow to fight melted: "How can I fight with all these people?" All these were his own relatives. He thus had a shock; He was paralyzed. He felt it was useless to fight because these were *madīyā* (my men) who have come to please Duryodhana. He thought, "What is the use of fighting them? I don't think I could be happy in killing. I will let them have the kingdom though it is mine. I cannot kill them. In whose company my happiness depends, by killing them I cannot be happy. If I fight, I have to destroy them. They don't know successful retreat, and they fight to die or win. I cannot gain victory without killing them, nor can I fight thinking I am going to die. My heart is not comfortable now and will be more uncomfortable by killing them. Then, what is this fight for?" He continues, "You may argue it is not a question of kingdom but of establishing *dharma*; I don't think that even this will be accomplished because *dharma* has to abide in people. If I kill them all, how can I protect *dharma*? If all are killed, the institution of marriage and all other institutions of *dharma* will go away; there will be nobody to preserve or show the *dharma*, and the society will go in for convenience. Hence I see in this war only sin, destruction, confusion of society; nothing more." Arjuna tells Kṛṣṇa

Na kānkṣe vijayam kṛṣṇa
na ca rājyam sukhāni ca
Kim no rājyena govinda
kim bhogair jīvitena vā. (I-32)

Yeṣām arthe kānkṣitam no
rājyambhogāḥ sukhāni ca
Ta ime avasthitā yuddhe
prāṇāmstyaktvā dhanāni ca. (I-33)

Nihatya dhārtarāṣṭrānnaḥ
kā prītissyāt janārdana. (I-36)

" I don't want victory, much less kingdom. I don't want comfort, I don't want anything; what is there for us, gaining these? All the pleasures will be tainted by the death of all my people. Though enjoying pleasures, they will not be pleasures but tainted by the death of Bhīṣma and others. O Lord! I don't bargain for this; I will not fight."

Evamuktvā arjunaḥ sānkhye
rathopastha upāviśat
Visṛjya saśaram cāpam
śokasamvigna mānasaḥ. (I-47)

So saying, abandoning his bow and arrow, Arjuna sat in the chariot with his mind filled with grief.

Finding that there is no answer to the problem, he did not run away to Ṛṣikeś (*nivṛtti*), nor did he go in for war (*pravṛtti*). He could not decide because of his own inadequacy. Finding argument both for and against, he was confused and overwhelmed by sorrow. Not that he did not decide; he could not. He expected Kṛṣṇa to help him. What he did, what wonder Kṛṣṇa did, and how he helped Arjuna, will be seen in the *Gītā*.

3

Search for the Solution

ARJUNA VIṢĀDA YOGA—THE SORROW OF ARJUNA

The first chapter of the *Gītā* presents Arjuna as a person who was caught in conflict and who could not see what was right and wrong in a given situation. The situation was the battlefield. If the people against whom he had to fight were unknown to him, he would have fought. When he saw people on the other side, he found in them his own people and, therefore, he found it impossible to fight. That created the conflict. He knew deep within that it was his *dharma* to see that the evildoer Duryodhana was to be punished; at the same time he found in him a cousin. So, between duties and personal relations there was a conflict; between assimilated reason and emotion there was confusion. So he sat on the chariot, saying, "I am not interested in victory, in kingdom, in pleasures. Of what use to us a kingdom, pleasures? Why should we even live?" He thought that the war would bring destruction to both sides, that victory would mean nothing. This chapter is called *Arjuna Viṣāda Yoga*, the sorrow of Arjuna. Yoga here means the subject matter. This chapter gives the context for Arjuna to think differently.

SĀNKHYA YOGA—CHAPTER OF KNOWLEDGE, ADVICE OF *KṚṢṆA*

The next chapter is called *Sānkhya Yoga*, a chapter of knowledge, gaining which he will gain freedom from conflicts. Sanjaya, the commentator of the happenings on the battlefield, says

Tam tathā kṛpayāviṣṭam
aśrupūrnākulekṣaṇam

Viṣīdantamidam vākyam
uvāca madhusūdanaḥ. (II-1)

To him (Arjuna), who is thus overwhelmed by sympathy, whose eyes are blocked with tears, and who is sad, Kṛṣṇa says these words

Kutastvā kaśmalamidam
viṣame samupasthitam
Anāryajuṣṭam asvargyam
akīrtikaram arjuna. (II-2)

Klaibyam mā sma gamaḥ pārtha
naitattvaiyyupapadyate
Kṣudram hṛdaya daurbalyam
tyaktvottiṣṭha parantapa. (II-3)

These two verses are the words of advice of Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna. The *Gītā* has not yet begun. Kṛṣṇa asks him to face the battle with certain words, words that would shake Arjuna and whip him up, words he does not deserve. But this will make him think. Because his action can be interpreted as an action born of fear, Kṛṣṇa describes him as a frightened one. "You are placed in a situation where you are supposed to act, not talk. How can you act when you are talking like this? You have placed not only yourself in this situation, but pulled me in too. Have I backed a wrong horse which does not even start? This is not becoming of an *Ārya*, who acts in accordance with what is right. There must be alignment between the thoughts and actions of an *Ārya*. There is no connection between what you are talking, and your culture and upbringing. What you want to do is not capable of giving you either fame of heaven, *akīrtikaram*, *asvargyam*. How did you come to know that there would be sin by fighting? Sin is not something that you see with your physical eyes, but is known only through the *Dharma S'āstra*. I have also studied the *S'āstra*, which says that a fellow who runs away from the battlefield is not going to heaven, much less will better his lot here, but is committing

sin, *pāpa*. That man is considered a sinner. Don't you think that the gates of heaven are open for you? This action is not good for your hereafter."

"If you say, 'I don't bother about my future, I am a practical man, I want to live for a few years, I want to get as much as I can get out of this life,' even then this action will not help you because this will bring down all the fame you have gained so far. Arjuna, you have worked for it assiduously; all the name you have gained so far will be brought to a naught because of this one action. Everyone will talk about you as a great warrior who ran away from the battlefield. You will be laughed at as a great coward, a great archer with a chicken-heart. They will forget that you were a mighty man, but will only talk about you in such words as would sully my tongue if I express them."

Avācya vādāmśca bahūn vadiṣyanti tavāhitāḥ
Nindantastava sāmarthyam tato duḥkhataram nu kim. (II-36)

"They will invent new words for you. You cannot remain anywhere: You will be hounded out by Duryodhana. You may think that you would retire to a remote corner of the Himalayas and leave it to the Lord or chance to provide you food. But people will come there for pilgrimage. They will know that Arjuna is sitting under the tree, and they will come and see you. They will think you are a useless fellow, a chickenhearted spineless creature. If you were an unknown soldier, there would be no problem; no one except your wife would know. But if you run away, it is not going to be that simple; all others will follow; and Duryodhana will win the battle without a shot. There will be publicity... He will see with all the media at his command that they convey this message to everyone—'Arjuna saw the formation of my army and got so frightened that he ran away from the battlefield. He ran away, not out of compassion, but only due to fear.' A Duryodhana-like king cannot afford to have any admirer of Arjuna in his country; the despot will see to it that all admire only him. Therefore,

Klaibyam māsma gamaḥ—do not give place to unmanliness. I am not able to appreciate you. Let not this overwhelm you because, *Na etat tvayi upapadyate*—this is not becoming of you. For anybody else it may be acceptable; for you, the prince, it is not. If you run away from the duty you have got to do, who else will perform it? Seeing your own *dharma*, hold on to your post and do what is expected of you. *Kṣudram hṛdaya daurbalyam tyaktvottiṣṭha*—giving up the weakness of heart, get up and live to be the title you enjoy, *parantapa*, the destroyer of enemies. Do not abuse your name or *dharma*'s name."

ARJUNA'S DISCOVERY OF THE PROBLEM

Thus Kṛṣṇa uses words that shake Arjuna's heart, because the latter would never expect Kṛṣṇa to think of him as a frightened one. He cannot even spell the word fear; such was Arjuna who was never afraid in his lifetime. But he is called *klība*, a eunuch. If anyone else had called him this, Arjuna would have killed him. He had always retained his self-respect, defended and asserted it within the framework of *dharma*. He is called here, "You are not a man nor a woman." Hearing this, he could not remain silent; he did talk.

He replies to Kṛṣṇa, "I don't deserve these words; you know me very well. All I say is, how can I fight Bhīṣma and Droṇa? You may call me a coward, but I am a brave man. A brave one can be compassionate too. He can also have sympathy and attachment. He says

Katham bhiṣmamaham sankhye
droṇam ca madhusūdana
Iṣubhiḥ pratiyotsyāmi
pūjārhāvarisūdana. (II-4)

"These people are not mere acquaintances or relatives; they are *pūjārhāḥ*—who deserve worship from my hands—because they are the people on whose laps I grew and gained all my skills

and knowledge in my life. How can I fight against them? I cannot send pointed arrows to them instead of flowers which they deserve. You may say, ' If they don't have any qualms, why should you have such feelings?' They can fight against me by casting their lot with Duryodhana; I cannot do such a thing. I would rather die at their hands instead of raising hands at them."

Sometimes you solve others' problems by patiently listening to them. When they are talking to you, they must think. Their muddled thoughts get straightened out in the process. Afterwards they say, "I have no problem." Thus Kṛṣṇa was listening very attentively. Here Arjuna is solving the problem in a different way now. As Kṛṣṇa is listening to him, he changes his pattern of thinking. All this time he had been talking of Bhīṣma and Droṇa and others; now he says

Gurūnahatvā hi mahānubhāvān
śreyo bhoktum bhaikṣyam apīha loke. (II-5)

"I would rather lead a life of getting alms, *bhikṣā*, than killing these great people."

Once this thought came to his mind, his mind went to those forests and returned, to where *sādhus* (monks) lived and for what purpose they lived there. In search of Truth, they chose the life of a *bhikṣu* (monk).

We say to a scientist, "You need not sweat and toil—you stay in air-conditioned rooms and continue research." We don't stand with a whip in hand and ask him to discover! We do say, "You go ahead, you may or may not discover; it does not matter. But you may do research; this itself is enough." The State takes care of him. He may have only a hypothesis. We do not know whether it is going to be right or not, and yet we support him. So too we support a *bhikṣu*. A *bhikṣu* is in search of Truth and is always supported by the people. We cannot do what he is doing, but we will support him. No society will disown a person who commits himself to the pursuit of Truth.

Arjuna now thinks, " I would rather live on *bhikṣā* than fight." His mind is now triggered off to a new line of thinking. Such a turn in direction of thinking happens to all of us too. An overwhelming event, say, the death of someone known to you, triggers off a new line of thinking: Yesterday he was all right; today he is dead. You don't want to accept the fact. Why should he die? Why should he have a heart attack? You think. You do everything for his family. When the body is committed to fire, you also follow the family. When you see the body being burnt and smoke going up, you think, "The man was alive yesterday. He is dead now; he is now as good as the log that burns him. What happened to him? What happened to his life? Was there somebody different from the body that is burnt now, or, was he the same as the body, so that he also burns along with the body? Or, was there someone else living in the body that left the body? Is it really this physical body that is myself, or is someone in this body and operates this body? Does the body serve as a container to the one contained, the life? He died leaving behind all that he gained, including this body for which he did so much. Am I also similar? One day am I also to kick the bucket? Where will I go? Is there something more profound, more lasting, than this physical body of flesh and bones? All those wants of mine do not appear to mean anything; death will spell doom to all of them. Should life be spent in struggles so that struggling I must die, or can I resolve these struggles?" This thinking is not about a topical problem but a human problem of life and death. This is the problem of every human being. When his child asks such a fundamental question, the dad will say, "Don't ask silly questions." Because he cannot answer them! These questions are fundamental and universal. How to console the wife of the dead man may be a topical question. Like hunger, it is also a topical problem. But the human problem will not change and has got to be solved, which one has come to terms with. This is the fundamental problem, the human problem.

Arjuna appreciates this human problem under his peculiar conditions. Due to his disposition to war and to things that go with war, he begins to see the profundity of life, sees the *mamatā* (my-ness) he has; he begins to see the smallness of such thinking. He begins to think on these lines. He asks

Na hi prapaśyāmi mamāpanudyāt
yacchoka mucchoṣaṇam indriyāṇām
Avāpya bhūmāvasapatnamṛddham
rājyam surāṇāmapi cādhipatyam. (II-8)

" What is the use of gaining the kingdom, even if I get a prosperous unrivalled kingdom? If there is a heaven, and if I were made the ruler of the heaven, I don't think that this sorrow of my heart will go away. That *śruti* of ' I want ' will still keep going. Even when kingdoms are won, there will be more kingdoms to exploit, inside and outside. How can you ever say I have achieved everything I want? I don't see how all these can negate the sorrow that is there, wept and unwept, which appears to be the constant companion of the human heart."

His mind seems to be clear now. He does not seem to be enamoured of kingdom and all other little achievements in life. He begins to feel that there is something more profound to life. He adds

Kārpaṇyadoṣopahatasvabhāvaḥ
pṛcchāmi tvām dharma sammūḍha cetāḥ
Yacchreyasyāt niscitam brūhi tanme
śiṣyasteham sādhi mām tvām prapannam. (II-7)

"Lord, I have achieved a lot of things in life, but I have been miserly in using my intellect."

Kṛpaṇa, a miser, is defined as one who leaves this world without knowing the true being, without fulfilling the real end of life. He has not even discerned the problem, so says the

Upaniṣad.* A disused intellect is an ill-kept one. This is miserliness. Arjuna, who had learned these, says, " I have never made any real use of my intellect; I did not discern this problem so far. Now I am not even able to decide between *dharma* and *adharma*, what to talk of the great things in life? I have not understood all this because I have been miserly in using my intellect. Now I am not going to leave you. Please, you be my *guru* (teacher). *Siṣyasteham*; *tvām prapannam mām śādhi*—" I am your disciple, saluting as I am at your feet. Please bless me. I want that which is called *śreyas*. Confer upon me the same because I am your *śiṣya* (student)." Kṛṣṇa had been a friend, philosopher and guide to Arjuna. Now he takes on the role of the teacher, but only when he finds a student in Arjuna.

What is *śreyas*? That which everyone seeks—and which Arjuna, Duryodhana, Rāvaṇa, Rāma, all sought—is called *śreyas*. Behind the objects you go after, there is a common end. You want to be a free being. You want to do something to remove the feeling of discomfort. If you are given a choice between being happy and being unhappy, you will choose only happiness. This is the choiceless choice, Hobson's Choice for all. That pleased being is what I want to be. This is the common human longing: for that pleased being. Pleased, full and complete being everyone wants to be. And this is called *śreyas*. It is not simply what is good for man, as is generally translated. It is the ultimate end that every man seeks, knowingly or unknowingly.

Good is a highly relative word. What is good today may not be good tomorrow. There is no such thing as the good medicine—it depends upon the disease. There is nothing absolutely good. That is why in our culture there are no permanent do's or dont's. There is no fixed *dharma*, nothing absolutely good and bad. Taking into account a number of factors, you decide what is good or bad; that is *dharma* or

Yo va etadaksharam Gaargi avidityaa Asmaallokaat praiti sa krpanah: Gaargi. One who leaves this world without knowing this limitless immortal (Being) is a miser. (*Brhadaaranyaka Upanishad*, III-10.)

adharma. In life, sometimes *satyam* (truth) is sacrificed, or *ahimsā* (noninjury) is sacrificed. For this reason alone we have *Purāṇas*. In our *Purāṇas*, *dharma* is not preached, but lived by people. There can be no absolute right or wrong in this relative world. The sense of *dharma* has to grow upon you as even your mastery of driving. A good driver knows how to negotiate any new traffic situation. So too, a man who knows *dharma* can decide and do the right thing in a given situation in life.

S'reyas thus means absolute good: It is good to me, to you, to anybody. The ends we seek are different and, over all these different ends, if there is anything that which everybody will be satisfied with, it is this PLEASED BEING. I want to discover myself as a pleased being. You may call it *Pūrṇa ātmā*, or happiness, or fullness, or *nirvāṇa*, or liberation. He who gains this is happy with himself, and he happily goes about doing things he has to do. THAT is what one is really searching for, but instead is picking up some tinsels and shells in life. This pleased being everyone searches for in life; it is this that is called *śreyas*. This *śreyas* Arjuna asks of Kṛṣṇa. He wants Kṛṣṇa to be his *guru* (teacher).

In any gain in the relative world, there is always a loss; even in heaven you will miss the earthly joys. What is absolute gain is *śreyas*. This has got to be gained from a teacher. From a teacher you gain knowledge, not advice. The teacher may be your father, mother, brother or any other person. What is gained is only knowledge. The Sanskrit word for teacher is *guru*.

Gukārastvandhakāro vai rukārastannivartakaḥ
Andhakāra nirodhitvāt gururityabhidhīyate.

The letters *gu* and *ru* account for two different things: *gu* stands for ignorance, darkness, and *ru* stands for dispelling the darkness. A thing is there in my room, but I don't see where it is because the room is dark. If I bring in a light, I see it because the light has dispelled darkness. I come to know

of what I already have but which I did not know, because of the arrival of light. So too, the one who dispels the darkness of ignorance by the light of knowledge is called *guru*. One who dispels the ignorance, ignorance of one's own Self, is *guru*. That *guru* Arjuna finds in Kṛṣṇa. Having discovered in him the *guru*, he stands in front of Him. He says, *S'iṣyasteham śādhimām tvām prapannam*—" I have surrendered to you; I am your student. Teach me." Kṛṣṇa accepts him as his student and teaches him. What is taught helps Arjuna solve his problem.

The Three Limitations

S'iṣyasteham śādhimām tvām prapannam—I am your disciple now; bless me with what is known as *śreyas*. What is sought after by everyone, gaining which one frees oneself from the sense of inadequacy, is called *śreyas*, the common end of all people. Arjuna wants *śreyas*. To gain this, he becomes a disciple, and discovers in Kṛṣṇa a *guru*. Kṛṣṇa accepts Arjuna as His disciple; He begins teaching him. Perhaps Kṛṣṇa was waiting for Arjuna to ask for this knowledge. Accepting him as His disciple, the Lord begins to teach him with a bang. He begins with a very reassuring statement, *Aśocyān anvaśocastvam*—" Arjuna, you say you are in sorrow. This sorrow you talk about is something that does not belong to you; it is something that does not deserve to be entertained. There is no legitimate cause for sorrow. "

This is the meaning of the first verse of the *Gītā*. The various verses until this point gave the background: Arjuna's conflict, analysis and consequent dispassion, leading to the discovery of the problem, and seeking the solution to the problem. Thus this is considered as the first verse of the *Gītā*. Sankara begins his commentary on the *Gītā* from this verse. Kṛṣṇa had talked to Arjuna before, but as a friend, philosopher and guide. Arjuna too did not find in Kṛṣṇa a teacher, but only a friend. Now he finds in him a teacher.

Lord Kṛṣṇa seems to rule out all causes for sorrow. Though one does become sorrowful, *Bhagavān* (the Lord) looks upon it as an intruder, like the bug that enters into your system. It is as though sorrow is not wanted and is therefore not a part of your nature. One cannot stand a dust particle in the eye; anything alien, whether it is a bug or bacillus, it has got to be thrown out as it is not part of the system. The eyeballs do

not irritate you, but a small grain of sand will irritate you to death because it is foreign; it is not tolerated by any part of your system. The very fact that you don't want to be sorrowful tells that sorrow is against your real nature. This looks a big statement, but you know that you don't want sorrow, and you want to get rid of it. That you are seeking happiness or freedom from sorrow, is well-known. In the beginning, what you need is absence of sorrow, and then positive happiness; like a man in the hospital wants to get rid of his disease and then wants go after his end—pleasure.

THE LIMITATIONS OF MAN

Man is conscious of a limited self with which he cannot get along happily. If you analyze, you will find man suffers from a threefold limitation. Every being is limited, but does not like this; limited, he cannot be happy. He wants to get rid of this limitation. How to get rid of these limitations is the teaching of the entire second chapter. In fact, this chapter covers the entire teaching, and other chapters cover some related topics.

The three broad heads of limitations are as follows.

1. LIMITATION OF SORROW: You feel that you are sorrowful; sometimes the sorrow is very eloquent, or it is only an unwept sorrow. A feeling, "All is not well with me," is the basis of sorrow. The human heart is subject to sorrow is one limitation which no one wants to accept.

2. LIMITATION OF TIME: Another thing that you don't want to have is the limitation by time. Nobody wants to die today; there is always a love for continuity. There is this love to be, not to die. Only when you find that this world cannot give any happiness, you quit. If one is healthy and happy, he is not willing to die. This love to live is in animals and plants. Even a tree makes a bend to grow towards the sun. You are ready to sacrifice a limb for preserving your life. Each one wants to live. Perhaps it is this love for continuity that makes one desire a son or a daughter. He does not want to disappear

without leaving a trace; something has to be left behind. An image of his being should continue for posterity! It is this love for continuity that makes him engrave his name on a stone: He hopes to live in that stone! He knows one day he will die, but still he wants to live for one more day. It is like the sign-board in Indian shops, "Cash today, credit tomorrow." Any tomorrow is only a today when it is born. Man thus loves eternity; he does not want to take himself to be mortal. This mortality is caused by time. In time alone, on the sands of time alone, your birth and death are marked. Born is a man at a given time and date, dead he is at a given time and place. This limitation caused by time is another limitation that one cannot stand.

3. LIMITATION OF IGNORANCE: The third factor that man cannot stand is ignorance. If a man does not go to school or institute to learn, at least he stands there to see what is there! If it is an accident, he wants to know what is happening. This is due to love of knowledge. He cannot stand ignornace; he wants to know what goes around him. All this is because he should know what is happening. This is due to an innate love for knowledge and an innate hatred for ignorance. This quest is never abated. Always he wants to know.

Please examine the pursuits in your life. All your life you have been trying to get rid of these three limitations: "I cannot stand that I am ignorant, I cannot stand that I am mortal, I cannot stand that I am a sorrowful being." I seem to have concluded that I am an ignorant, incomplete, mortal. This is the basis for all my pursuits. I want more security and more objects so that I can be comfortable in the evening of my life. Thus a great part of time is spent in going after things that are meant to make one happy. Another part of one's life is spent in going after things that keep one going for a day more. When one does exercises, takes vitamins and proteins, it is for the survival for a day more. The third part of one's life is spent on gathering knowledge. It is the predominant part for some like the scientists. For them, knowledge is the most important. For everyone, this does occupy a part of his

life. When he picks up the newspaper in the morning, it is due to this quest for knowledge. Even attending *Gītā* talks is to make sure that he can say to others that he too knows something about the *Gītā*. The three things we seek through all pursuits are knowledge, freedom from fear of death, and freedom from being unhappy.

The Lord says that all the three pursuits are illegitimate. He says all the three are *aśocyān*, they are not something which deserve any grief. A problem can be solved if it is real. If you see a snake on the road, you can choose to stay away or do something to chase it away so that you can cross the road. It is a legitimate problem. If there is an illegitimate problem looming large in your mind, how can you solve this problem by doing anything? Let us take the famous example of a snake projected on a rope by your creative mind. This illegitimate projected problem and the resultant fear of the snake can be solved only by seeing that there is only a rope and not a snake, and not by beating the snake! This snake on the rope will not be chased by throwing a stone, or praying, or clapping. An illegitimate problem cannot be solved by any action. The snake and the fright caused by it will go away only if you stand there and analyze, see if there is a snake. Once you see with a better light, the problem is solved and your fear goes away. Of course, the aftereffect of tremor may be there for some time! Here you have solved the problem by knowing. A legitimate problem can be solved by doing something, but an illegitimate one can be solved only by knowing what the problem is.

WHAT IS KNOWLEDGE, *SĀNKHYA*?

In the very beginning itself, the Lord said that all the three things that you want to achieve need not be achieved by you by saying *aśocyān anvaśocaḥ*—you grieve over things that do not deserve any grief. You want to achieve these because you do not know that they are already achieved, just as the removal of the snake is already achieved. You don't do anything to remove the snake because it is not there. What IS, is only the

rope, which cannot frighten you. If I make you see that there is no problem, I release you from this problem. What makes you see that there is no problem, is knowledge. This particular knowledge is called *Sānkhya*: *Samyak khyāyate iti sānkhyam*—what is clearly seen, unfolded by *Vedānta*, is *sānkhyam*, the knowledge that helps in discovering the illegitimate nature of the problem. This is the subject matter of the second chapter of the *Gītā*. That is why the second chapter is called *Sānkhya Yoga*. Other chapters discuss either the same, or topics that can help you in owning up that knowledge which you gain.

Since Kṛṣṇa begins with the statement that the whole problem is illegitimate, it opens up a new form of enquiry. It looks as though I have made a wrong conclusion about myself and my life! Otherwise, Kṛṣṇa need not say *aśocyān*, those which do not deserve any grief. Why do we go to console a bereaved one? Because, you think that it is not right for one to be unhappy. Why send best wishes for New Year? After all, you have given one already for last year! Perhaps you know that this year will be as miserable as the last one, and so wish a happy year. Why? Because, you don't want that sorrow and accept it. On the other hand, you don't console the one who is happy. You don't tell him, "I am very sorry to see you happy." But you ask him to tell you how he is happy. If you don't want sorrow, the opposite should be your nature. "If so, why should I be searching?" Because, you know not what you are. Thus a new form of thinking is unfolded. There seems to be a self-ignorance if the conclusion about yourself is any indication.

This is like the one who was searching for the key he lost, which was in his pocket all along. Or, better still, it is like the story of the fellow who went to the market to buy donkeys. A man went to a nearby town to buy five donkeys. Because his village was too far, he rode back on one of them. While riding, he wanted to make sure that all the five donkeys were walking along, so he counted and discovered that there were

only four donkeys. He did not count the fifth on which he was riding! When he came home, he was sad. As he was getting off, he told his wife, "I bought five donkeys but I lost one on the way. I do not know how." The wife took one look, understood the problem, and remarked, "I don't see five, but six donkeys!"

Thus, although the thing is right there, he disowns it and goes about searching for that very thing. Such a problem is an illegitimate one. One has to see that fact that the thing is there. This is the nature of the human problem because the confusion is universal as ignorance is universal. Everyone is born with total ignorance. You did not know your father, mother or anything when you were born. You went on picking up knowledge when your sense organs started operating, kept on shedding ignorance. Starting from knowing who your father was or mother was, you shed various forms of ignorance. You had many teachers in the course of life—father, mother, granny, preceptors, etc. What did you do to remove, to shed, the ignorance of yourself? Hardly anything. Therefore, there is still the self-ignorance.

SELF-IGNORANCE—THE RELATIVE "I"

If I ask a simple question, you will appreciate the fact that you don't know anything about yourself. In everyday life what you do gain is experience. Any experience brings out of yourself a given fellow. Who is he? You say, "In the morning I got up, I bathed, I ate, I went to office, I ate lunch, I left the office, I came home, and I slept." "I" is there very much though you did varied things. Do you really know anything about this "I"?

Every experience involves you, the experiencer. You undergo various forms of experience. Though you are the same in all these, you present yourself differently to any one single unit of experience. For example, to your father you present yourself as the son, to your son as the father, to your wife as the husband. To a friend, you are his friend; to your master, as though you are

an obedient servant! To your servant, you become the master, to the teacher, you are the student, to the student, the teacher. To various individuals you have various distinct relations. To each one you bring out of yourself only a relative person. All these are relative roles you assume when you act in the world.

This is true with different objects, situations, events, etc. You are not the same to different objects; to the same object, you act differently at different times. Today you see the rising sun; you are very happy. The next day the same sunrise does not help you; you feel like sleeping, but the sun is up, you have to take care of the daily woes, so you don't like the sunrise. This is true for everyone. There is nothing in life that you can say, "I like this always." The "liker" is thus a relative "I"; the "disliker" is a relative "I". So too, the frustrated one, the happy one, the bored one. . . all are only relative "I"s. Then, who are you fundamentally? Who are you without reference to any of these mental states of frustration, anger, despair and boredom? When you were young, there was an "I" which said, "I am a boy of ten years." Then you were a young man, then a man, then a middle-aged man, then an aged man. In all these physical states, "I" is the same. Though you keep on changing, you are not the boy, nor the young man; this physical body is subject to change. All these states are relative only. Kṛṣṇa says

Dehinosmin yathā dehe kaumāram yauvanam jarā
Tathā dehāntaraprāptiḥ dhīrastatra na muhyati. (II-13)

"Just as infancy, youth, and old age are for the one indwelling in this body, so too there is gaining another body (rebirth). The wise man is not deluded (sorrowful) by this."

In this physical body, Arjuna, boyhood, youth, and old age, in all of them, there is one "I". All you know are only relative "I"s. In all of them, who is common? The "I" is common. "I" as the boy, youth, uncle, cousin, frustrated . . . in all these "I AM" is common. The "I" assumes

all these various forms of relative roles in life, like an actor on the stage. The actor plays different roles; he can come in any form. But from the face you all know him. You sift the roles and find him out. Similarly, in this physical body alone, there is one "I" which takes on the roles of boy and young man. This "I" seems to be the central being who informs all experiences, and plays different roles. Who is that central being?

THE KNOWLEDGE—THE FUNDAMENTAL "I"

Suppose, in a play an actor plays the role of a king, another the role of a beggar, the third a minister. Each one has to play his role. Suppose, the king thinks that he is really a king, forgets his script, occupies the stage and never goes to the green room; the beggar also thinks he is a beggar and goes about begging on or off the stage, and the minister also thinks that he is a minister. None of them can afford to play their roles if they assume that they really are those roles! It is not important whether one may play the role of a beggar or king. The problem is when he forgets that he is playing a role and thinks that he is really the beggar or king. They will then be sent only to a mental hospital. If any actor takes his role to be himself, it is all loss. There is nothing wrong to play a role as long as he knows that he is playing a role. It is one thing to play a role and quite another to think yourself to be that role only.

That is what is happening to us all. You assume a number of roles, and forget yourself. No one is therefore able to relate to you. Every role you play is having a central being. Who is that being? Or, who is that "I" free from all the relative roles? "Who am I?" If this "Who am I" is not answered in myself clearly, there is a legitimate problem. I do not know that central being who informs all the roles I play. Only when I know that fundamental "I", I know who I am. *Bhagavān* says that this "I" is constantly there.

Vāsāmsi jīrṇāni yathā vihāya
navāni gṛhṇāti naroparāṇi. (II-22)

If one is wearing costumes, it is that ONE who gives life to the costumes. He may change the costumes, but HE is the same. Similarly, there is one who assumes different roles. That one is the " I ", the subject; everything else is an object. To know " Who am I " is to know what the subject is.

SUBJECT–OBJECT ENQUIRY

I see the sky; it is an object of my perception. I see the stars; they are objects of my perception. I see the building yonder, an object of my perception. I see things, objects of my perception. You see me, an object of your perception. I see you, an object of my perception. Not only forms I see, I perceive sounds, smells, tastes, touches; all these are objects of my perception. That self that perceives all these, is he the subject or object? He is the subject. Why? All others are objects of his perception. Then who are you, subject or object? You are the subject. Therefore, this world I am not. The one who knows the world is the subject; everything else I know is the object. The knower of an object is different from the object. " I am " not the object. Anything that I know is not me. That is how the enquiry begins, because in any of the objects there is no " I "-sense in them. I may have " my "-sense in them. You may say this is my book, my watch, my wife, my child, but in no one of them do you have the "I"-sense. You don't have the " I "-sense in anything that you see. Who that central being is, who goes about seeing the world, is taught by Kṛṣṇa. The freedom you gain by knowing this " I " is called *śreyas*.

5

Who am I?

THE MEANS OF KNOWLEDGE TO REMOVE SELF-IGNORANCE

Any form of ignorance does not go away by itself unless one gains the opposite: knowledge. Knowledge happens only when one makes use of a valid means of knowledge. If I am ignorant of myself, I have got to know who I am, and for this I do require a valid means of knowledge.

Words can be a valid means of knowledge, the words which are meant to reveal objects known and unknown. The knowledge that we get through words can be direct or indirect depending upon the object revealed by the word. If an object is away from you, the descriptive words will give rise in you a certain knowledge, which is an indirect knowledge. It has to be verified by another means of knowledge, such as, your organs of perception.

When the object of knowledge is already there, but still you don't recognize it, then words revealing the object do bring about direct knowledge. If you don't recognize the friend who is in front of you, whom you had met some ten years ago, when he is introduced to you, the recognition is direct and immediate. A traditional example used to indicate this is, *Soyam Devadattaḥ*—this is that Devadatta. This sentence gives you direct knowledge of the Devadatta you see in front of you. Still you do not recognize him.

WHY YOU ARE IGNORANT OF YOURSELF

You keep on shifting the relative roles, and there is no chance of knowing yourself. If in every moment of waking it is like this, the same is true in dream too. The next state of experience

is deep sleep. In that state you have no chance of knowing yourself or anything of the world. Thus in all the three states of experience, there is no chance for you to know yourself. Therefore, if a man continues to be ignorant of himself, it is no wonder that this ignorance is universal. To know about himself he has had no chance. In school there was no chance. At home there was a chance only to know himself as a relative fellow. The world also gives a few more relative relationships. There is no chance for him to know himself.

Therefore, we have to gain this knowledge, and the means of knowledge is this teaching. With the help of this teaching, we start the enquiry. The subject matter of enquiry is, "Who is this I?" Everything you come to know is an object. In this creation, there are only two things: You, the subject, and everything else you know, objects. They are called *kṣetram*, object, and *Kṣetrajñaḥ*, one who knows the object. This will be discussed later in detail in the thirteenth chapter of the *Gītā*, though in the second chapter itself it is unfolded.

AM I THE BODY?

We know that the objects are not "I" because I do not have the "I"-sense in them. But if someone touches your body, you say, "I am touched." So the "I"-sense seems to be here in this body. "I", the subject, is confined to this physical body. That is all I know. If the body is tall, I am tall; body is short, I am short; body is dark, I am dark; body is slim, I am slim; body is fat, I am fat. This is how we feel. Above my head, or, beyond the tip of my nose, I am not. Hence it is clear that I am a mortal because, when the body comes, I come, body goes, I go. This body and I are identical; I take myself as the body. Thus all the limitations that belong to the body belong to me. I am a limited mortal, is thus a natural conclusion. Because I don't have the "I"-sense elsewhere, this conclusion is the source of all the problems. This conclusion is not as valid as you think.

Here begins the real enquiry in question. This "I"-sense with the body even my dog has! It knows that its "I" abides only from the tip of the nose to the tip of the tail, and not beyond. Every primitive man also knows this. That this physical body is myself: *Dehe puṣte aham puṣtaḥ; dehe naṣte aham naṣtaḥ*—when the body is healthy, I am healthy; when the body dies, I die. So, whatever be the condition of the body, I am that. There is total identity between the body and I. Here we probe into this notion and prick this bubble. The knower "I" is the subject, and anything that is known is "this", the object. Then the question is whether this physical body is known or not. When one says, "I am tall," is the tall physical body known or not? If it is not known, he cannot say, "I am tall." Then if the body is known, it is only an object. Then who is the subject? It cannot be the body. When you see a tall building, you know you are distinct from that building. You cannot become what you see; the seer is always distinct from the seen. The knower is always distinct from the known. This physical body is an object of your perception. You are aware of this physical body, as well as any other body. Your physical body is best known to you than to anybody else! If there is a back pain, you know it and not others! So you cannot be the body, but someone who is distinct from but associated with this body. If the body you are not, who are you?

AM I THE SENSE ORGANS?

You may say that you are the sense organs, the organs of perception. Through them you hear, touch, see, taste and smell, and thus cognize the world. So one may say, "Because eyes are bright, I am bright; eyes are blind, I am blind; if dull, I am dull." But then, is it not a known fact that your eyes are dull, bright or blind? Are you not the knower of the sense organs? The subject, the knower, must be distinct from the known, the sense organs. You can say that you are not deaf, but the knower of deafness of the ears, the knower of

the blindness of the eyes, the knower of the blocked nose. But you are not the deaf ear, the blind eye, or the blocked nose. You know the condition of these sense organs. So I cannot be the sense organs. Then who is the knower?

AM I THE MIND?

Perhaps you say, " I am the mind." As long as thoughts are, you are the thinking mind that entertains various thoughts. True, with the mind you operate the sense organs. If your mind is not there behind the sense organs, you don't see, hear or taste. It is the mind which gathers experiences. If the mind is restless, you are restless. If it is quiet, you are quiet. If it is sad, you are sad. If the mind is angry, you are angry. Nobody says, " I am fine, but my mind is restless." But then, you know that your mind is restless. If that mind is restless, how can you then say, " I am restless?" Are you the knower of the mind or the restlessness? You can say the mind is restless, but you cannot say, " I am restless." But still you say you are restless because you take the mental condition itself as you. So you are not the mind. If you are not the mind, then who are you?

AM I THE INTELLECT?

You cannot cite your profession in reply and say, " I am a lawyer." You did not come to the world with all the laws in your head. You studied them after you were born. You went to the school and you became a lawyer. Like you know the mind and its conditions, you know law. That you are a lawyer is only with reference to your intellectual achievement. The question remains, " Who are you?" You cannot say, " I am memory," for memories also are gathered and recalled. There is someone who is aware of and recalling these memories.

AM I NOTHING, IGNORANCE?

You cannot say, " I am Gupta," because it is a name given to you. Only in records it is Gupta. Even your friends have

different names for you! You may change your name, but you won't become different. There is someone who is wearing this name, to whom this name is stuck; who is he? You must say, "I am someone who is aware of all these." Perhaps, it is total ignorance; since the body, emotions, thirst, hunger, mind, knowledge. . . cannot be I, what is left out is pure ignorance, as obtains in deep sleep state. All my knowledge goes away in deep sleep. A fine musician I may be, but when I sleep and snore, the snore will have no *śruti* nor melody. *Andhaḥ anandho bhavati*—the blind man is no more blind, is what the *Veda* says. Once the blind one is asleep, he is no more blind; nor the other one who can see is aware that he is not blind! But in the morning both get up and say, "I slept"; still that "I" seems to be there even in sleep! Otherwise, you cannot say, "I slept well, I did not know anything"—*Sukhamaham asvāpsam na kincit avediṣam*. Because everything disappears, including your body, everybody is interested in sleep. It is one state where the human being has no problem whatsoever because there is total ignorance. So you can conclude, "I am nothing, I am ignorance." If you are that ignorance, then you cannot say, "I slept well." This shows that you do seem to know that you are ignorance! Thus if I ask, "Do you know Chinese?", you will say, "I don't know." If I ask you, "How do you know?", you will say, "I know that I don't know." You are thus aware of the fact that you don't know. You also know that you know. So you cannot be ignorance.

WHO AM I?—I AM LIMITLESSNESS

Therefore, you are something different from the body, hunger and thirst, mind, knowledge, memory and ignorance. Then who are you? You are also not any relative relations like friend, father, son, because for all these you have to jump out of yourself and see the relation of yourself with others. You are thus distinct from all of them. Therefore, what you say "I", the "I" is none of these things that you think you are. You

have to say then, "I am someone who is aware of my ignorance, my knowledge, my memories, my emotions, my hunger, my sense organs and my body. All that I hear, see, smell, taste or touch are objects. Who is this " I " behind all these which you are aware of? The *Gītā* says that it is that Being whom you call " I " because of whom you are aware of your body, sense organs, and other things that you know.

How many " I's " are there? If I ask you how many real " You's " are there, the reply can be, " one " only. When I say you are fat, I mean the body. When I say you are hungry, I mean your *prāṇa* (physiological function). You are blind, I mean your sense organs; you are restless, I mean your mind; you don't know, I mean your ignorance, and when I say " you ", it can go to that " I " because of which you are aware of all the objects. Up to that point my index finger can travel. That " I " cannot be something that is ignorant, or it cannot be something that is inert.

You are aware of things including your own body, mind and their functions. What is that person who knows this, is aware of this? Who is the awarer, the awareful being? Each one of you have to take " I " as awarer, awarer, awarer. Aware of what? Aware of things. The question then arises, " Are you the awarer all the time, or are you the awarer with reference to things that you are aware of? You are an awarer only with reference to objects, like you are a seer only with reference to objects seen, and a hearer with reference to sounds heard, taster with reference to tastes, etc. So, with respect to yourself, you are only the content of the awarer, the essence of the awarer, that can be only the Awareness. " I " am therefore Awareness which becomes aware of various things. Thus I am awarer with reference to objects, but with reference to myself I am pure Awareness. This Awareness, " I ", is limitless and non-dual. Any object can be limited by time, space or objectivity. Awareness, " I ", is not an object, and so has no dimensions or shape. It is the very basis of the world of objects, the three states of experience of waking, dream and deep sleep. Thus, Awareness , " I ", is limitless, and because it is limitless

it is non-dual. This limitlessness YOU are, is the teaching of the *Gītā*. This is called *Sānkhya*, knowledge. It is not intellectual; it is rational, but it makes you see what you are. It is not a logical theory that we are propounding; it is a valid means of knowledge. It is like opening your eyes and seeing an object. There is no theory or practice involved in seeing. So it is here. What I talk is logical, but that you are LIMITLESS is not a speculative logical concept. It is not established by pure logic. Logic is made use of to make you see what you really are. So this " I " that I talk about is the Awareness because of which everyone is aware of objects. That Awareness can have no form. If Awareness were to have a form, it must be an object capable of being seen by another awareness. The second awareness in turn must be capable of being cognized by another .... Thus we arrive at a logical absurdity of *regress ad infinitum*. " I " am formless. There can be no question of bigness or smallness if " I " Awareness am free from any form. Thus there is no limitation of space upon me. Therefore, I am not limited by space. The *Gītā* says, *Aham sarva gataḥ*—I am all-pervasive. " I ", the body, is not all-pervasive, but " I ", the Awareness, is. Everything must be in that Awareness. I am Awareness, you are Awareness, both are aware of our bodies as well as the space in between the two bodies! Therefore, are we not ONE? Between " you " Awareness and " I " Awareness is there not an identity? There can be no second awareness.

HOW AND WHY?

Let us take the moon. What is the distance between the moon and you? You may say it is some definite number of miles. Now, I ask, " What is the distance between space and moon?" There cannot be any distance between moon and space because moon is IN SPACE and space is in and through the moon. Distance itself is in the space between two objects in space, but between space and space there is no distance. Similarly, I am aware of the sun, of the sky, of the stars. They

all fall within Awareness. Body falls within Awareness, knowledge of space falls within Awareness, knowledge of sky falls within Awareness; then what is the distance between "you" Awareness and the sky which falls within Awareness? There can be no distance. You ARE Awareness, and in Awareness are the stars up above. Between Awareness and the stars there is no distance; between Awareness and anything you conceive there will be no distance. "You" are Awareness, "he" is Awareness, "she" is Awareness, "I" am Awareness. How many awarenesses are there? There is only ONE Awareness. That Awareness in which all are, that Awareness is one.

That Awareness is circumscribed neither by space nor by time. Why? Because "I" am aware of time. That Awareness cannot be destroyed because it has no form, just as space that has no form cannot be destroyed. That Awareness "I" cannot be slain, cannot be drowned. Anything that is born in time can be destroyed in time. Awareness is the very basis of time. So it is beyond the realm of time and not really beyond the realm of destruction. Also, if it is an object, it can be destroyed; but it is the nature of the very subject, being the very basis for everything. Because Awareness is formless, it cannot be destroyed by cutting away parts. Thus all engines of destruction are incapable of destroying Awareness "I".

The Lord says in the *Gītā*

Nainam chhindanti śastrāṇi nainam dahati pāvakaḥ
Na cainam kledayantyapaḥ na śoṣayati mārutaḥ. (II-23)
Acchedyoyam adāhyoyam akledyośoṣya eva ca
Nityaḥ sarvagatassthāṇuḥ acaloyam sanātanaḥ. (II-24)

Weapons cannot cut it; much less fire can burn; waters cannot drown, even air cannot dry. All these means of destruction can have no scope to destroy "I", the Awareness. Because it is something because of which I am aware of space and time. The "I" Awareness cannot be cut, burnt, drowned

or dried. For it is beyond time, all-pervasive, immutable and immovable. The " I " Awareness is in and through all your waking, dream and sleep. What is not there in sleep is only time and space; all these concepts together with that mind by which you know any object, are not there. I am "Awareness" which is at once whole, *pūrṇah*—complete, full. All are in the same basic platform of Awareness. Therefore, " I " am not circumscribed by space. So " I " am *sarvagataḥ*—all-pervasive.

In Awareness, the subject, are space and time, and in time-space alone is the whole creation. Therefore, " I " am free from all limitations. Therefore, Kṛṣṇa says

Avyaktoyam acintyoyam avikāryoyam ucyate
Tasmādevam viditvainam nānuśocitum arhasi. (II-25)

"The Awareness, 'I' is not manifest (like any object I perceive), cannot be thought of (like I think of an object), and not subject to modification (because it is not born). Knowing yourself to be Awareness, there is no cause for grief." Arjuna, where is the room for you to grieve? You are Awareness. Even space cannot move that in which space shines. Awareness, where can it move? It is *acalaḥ*—immovable. Therefore, Arjuna, you need not grieve over things.

If you say, " I am the physical body, " all grief belongs to you and not to anybody else! Physical body has millions of limitations: The body has no capacity to fly like a bird. It does not have the scent of a dog, the radar system of a bat; thus it is limited. If you are the physical body, you should be subject to grief. If you are generally *duḥkhi*, sorrowful, it is right. Things that you have not found, things that you do not have now, are millions. Therefore, if you cannot but pull a long face, all this is due to the wrong conclusion: I conclude that I am mortal and then I want to be free from mortality. You are not limited. Therefore, one problem, fear of mortality, is illegitimate. You don't deserve to grieve because you

are eternal, not limited by time and space. If you say, " I am here and I am not there, " that also is illegitimate because in you is the very concept of space. If you say, " I don't know, I am ignorant, " this too is incorrect. You are Awareness in which alone are all forms of knowledge. Therefore, you cannot say, " I am ignorant. " That " I am ignorant " also is illegitimate. Thus, *Natvam śocitumarhasi*—you need not grieve over anything. You are full and complete. Any sorrow that you entertain is illegitimate as you are limitlessness. So Arjuna, *asocyān anvaśocastvam*—you grieve over things that do not deserve any grief.

6

You are Limitlessness, Happiness

LIMITATION IS NOTIONAL, NOT REAL

Sānkhya means knowledge, knowledge of oneself. Arjuna was given this knowledge of his Self, a self that is free from any form of limitation. The Self is the same " I " that you are now, which is called *Ātmā*, which is taken wrongly since it is not known. This error about oneself is a universal error, ignorance being universal. I take myself only as a limited being, limited by time, place, knowledge, and sorrow. These limitations are felt by everyone innately, and that is why one goes about doing things to gain freedom from limitations. All strivings in life are but the manifestation of this original conclusion about myself being limited. Kṛṣṇa knows these conclusions in Arjuna, so He says , " Arjuna, all the notions that you are a mortal, you are ignorant and sorrowful, are due to the fact that you take yourself to be other than what you really are. To say that you are limitless is to say that your physical body is not your nature. Because, what is natural. will be accepted by you naturally. That is why nobody goes about complaining about hunger. This is something natural The fact that you strive against mortality shows that you are not mortal. You don't accept your conclusions about mortality, sadness or ignorance. If you accept these, you will let things go and perhaps you will be happy. You cannot accept them because they are against your nature."

Though there are apartments and apartments in this city, still you call only a particular apartment as yours. Similarly, you have a peculiar relation with the body. But to say, " I am the body, " is entirely different. You don't say, " I am the apartment." This body which you can objectify, to call this " I am the body," is a wrong conclusion. Like this, your

hunger, thirst, various forms of thinking, quiet or restless state of the mind, all these YOU are aware of. Also, various forms of knowledge, your memories, and your ignorance are known to you. The knower is distinct from anything that is known. Also, the relative relations like father, husband, uncle... all these are from the external standpoint, due to relationships with people. In all these, one thing that is common is " I ". The " I " is the knower. The nature of the knower is Awareness from its own standpoint. It has to be only simple awareness; just as the content of the wave is indeed water, the content of awarer is only Awareness, and nothing else. It is called *Cit* or *Caitanyam* in Sanskrit.

This " I " Awareness, the *Cit*, has no form. This Awareness is not confined here or elsewhere. Everything inside and outside exists only in Awareness, even as in space there is no inside or outside with reference to space. We may say we are inside and others are outside the room, from the standpoint of the walls of the room. All spatial expressions are only from a standpoint. Shift your standpoint from the wall to space itself. In that space is the wall, planets, the whole universe. Similarly, the sense organs, the objects seen, including one's own body, all fall within the Awareness alone. An object can be beyond my thought, but cannot be beyond the scope of Awareness. Thought itself is not Awareness. Thought is, Awareness is; thought goes, Awareness still is. When an object comes in my thought, I think that object alone is in Awareness. This is an unfortunate conclusion. Shift the point of view from thought to Awareness. The object, the thinker, and the thought in the mind are all in one Awareness.

Awareness is something in which time is. In sleep, or even in a moment of joy, this time is resolved. That moment, when you are not aware of time, is called timelessness, eternity. Eternity thus does not mean that which remains continuously in time. A long time is not eternal because eternity is not caught in time. A mountain has been there for a long time, but you can see the effect of time on this. Time does bring

change on anything. Anything that exists in time must change and go out of shape. But timelessness is exactly called eternity. A given moment in which time disappears, that moment is eternity. Awareness is the basis for even the concepts of time and space. Time is, time goes; Awareness " I " is. Therefore, " I " am beyond time and thus not subject to death. Therefore, says Kṛṣṇa

Vedāvināśinam nityam ya enam ajam avyayam. (II-21)

Awareness is free from birth and death. It is always there behind every form of thought. Before a thought is born, " I " Awareness is. When the thought is, the " I " Awareness is. Thought is gone, and " I " Awareness still is. This is easy to understand if we take an illustration. Before the wave is born, water is. While the wave is, water is. When the wave is gone, water is. The wave is resolved in water. In the same manner, thought is born, Awareness is. Thought is gone, Awareness is. In Awareness the space-time exists, in whose framework the stellar systems exist. " I " the Awareness have no boundary; there is no limit for me. I am limited only if I don't see myself beyond my nose. Then, this physical body is the limiting factor upon me. It is " I " because of which this very physical body is. But due to the notion that I am the body, I am limited. Therefore the *Gītā* says that by merely giving up the body you cannot solve the problem. You will come back.

S'arīrāṇi vihāya jīrṇāni anyāni samyāti navāni dehī. (II-22)

" The indweller of the body gains other bodies, casting off the old ones."

You will come back, perhaps a bit more idiotic! Body is not the problem. Mind is not the problem. Your sense organs are not the problem. The objects you see, like the sea, stars, sky or the laughter in the face of a toothless old man, these are not the problem. The real problem is the notion,

Deha pramaṇoham—I am of the size of the body. Due to this erroneous notion you go about doing things so that you can become limitless. How can the limited ever become limitless?

You cannot weep for your death because you are immortal. You cannot weep for ignorance because you are knowledge. Any knowledge that existed at any time, may it be in the intellect of Vyāsa, S'uka, Einstein or any great scientist, they all exist only in *Cit*, the Awareness. Even the knowledge in the dog, or in his master, is still in the same Awareness. There is no human-awareness and dog-awareness. There is only Awareness. If I can make the dog understand that he is Awareness, it will say, " Due to *upādhivaśāt*—the apparent conditioning by this body—I am a dog. Otherwise, I am not a barker, I am Awareness."

This is knowledge, *Sānkhya*; it is not *Yoga*. It is knowing. It is not doing something to this physical body. It is removing the ignorance imposed upon " I " the Awareness unwittingly. The removal of this erroneous notion alone is *Sānkhya*.

There is only one I, which is called *Ātmā*, the limitlessness, which is confused now, ignorant. This confused one is not going to find another *Ātmā* inside. This confusion is resolved by teaching. I the *Ātmā* is *Cit*, Awareness. Because the Awareness is beyond time, it cannot go out of shape or change; it always exists. So *Cit* is called *Sat*, existence. Kṛṣṇa says in the *Gītā*

Nāsato vidyate bhāvah nābhāvo vidyate sataḥ. (II-16)

" There can be no existence for an *asat*—a totally non-existent thing— ; nor can *sat*—existence—ever cease to exist."

One may say that in spite of *Ātmā*, ' I " Awareness, being limitless, he is feeling limited and very sad! He knows that *Ātmā* is beyond sadness, but HE is only sadder by knowing this! This is like the case of a beggar who knows he has inherited property but has no money to go to court to claim it. Now he is a sadder beggar! In spite of this knowledge, he is

not any richer. This is the new problem. The teaching appears only to accentuate one's feeling of sadness. At this point, let us analyze what is happiness.

THE STATE OF MAN

Man is generally sad, and once in a while he becomes happy. *Sukha*, happiness, and *duḥkha*, sorrow, alternate, but there is no predictability. He does not know when the *sukha* will come; it is anybody's guess. A thing that gave him *sukha* yesterday will not give him the same quantum of *sukha* today. Like rain, *sukha* also happens. The *sukha* seems to come and go, but he does not know when. What really happens in one's life is, *duḥkha*, *duḥkha*, *duḥkha*, *sukha*, *duḥkha*, *duḥkha*, *duḥkha*, *duḥkha*, *sukha* . . . . A momentary happiness gained once in a while keeps him going. Therefore, he has hope that he will be happier one day, and this keeps him going. Otherwise, one would commit suicide. Even the most tragic fellow picks up some happiness. Even he will laugh helplessly at slapstick jokes. If everybody does pick up a momentary happiness, there is always a chance of his becoming happy. So, we should know from where he gets that happiness.

IS HAPPINESS AN OBJECT?

There are objects and objects in the world; you cannot count them. Among those various objects, is there an object called happiness? Can you pick up an object called happiness? You can give one a sweet or a fruit, or some other object, but you cannot say "this" is happiness. For a naturopath a cup of half-boiled, unsalted, bitter gourd is happiness, but for others nothing can be more bitter than this! For one who loves *laddu*, it is happiness; for the other who does not like it, it is only a cannon-ball! No particular object can be called happiness as otherwise it should provide happiness to everyone.

You cannot also say that happiness is a quality of an object. Happiness does not stick to any object like the blueness or redness is sticking to the lotus or the pot. There is no object

having the quality of happiness. Had there been an object like this, everybody should feel happy by having that object. Sugar or salt tastes the same for everybody; like this, no object gives the same taste of happiness for everybody. But still one does pick up happiness from objects. Where is it? Can one say happiness is within oneself because it is not in any object?

IS HAPPINESS WITHIN ME?

If happiness is in you, is it in your liver, intestines, heart, kidneys, or pancreas? We cannot say any one of these internal organs is happiness or they secrete happiness. None of my sense organs is a source of happiness either. Otherwise, one will be always happy, because all these organs are always with me. Nor can one say that thoughts are the source of happiness. In fact, many a time thoughts are but a source of unhappiness.

I AM HAPPINESS

Then what is the source of happiness? If it is neither inside nor outside, what is left out? Myself. That self becuase of which I am aware of my body, my emotions, my thoughts, and objects of the world. That "I" alone is left out. That "I" alone must be happiness. Whenever I pick up an object which I like, I am with myself, and I am happy.

If you look back and see how you were when you gained a moment of happiness, you find that anything, an object or a person you like, takes you back to yourself. As long as a desire is, there is restlessness. When the object is gained, the restlessness is resolved and the mind is pleased. In the pleased mind I discover happiness, and not in any object. Things I love are those which can bring about in me a pleased frame of mind. All cannot do this, all objects do not please my mind, because I do not have a value for them. Only certain objects and individuals, according to my own makeup and conditioning, please me. The happiness is never from the object or person. The sight of a beautiful

scenery, a beautiful object, or reading a poem, can make you feel happy, and that happiness is but an expression of your own nature, a *leśa*, a speck of your own Self which is happiness. If happiness is manifest in a satisfied mind, it is clear that it is only the Self, "I", that is happiness.

SLEEP, A STATE OF HAPPINESS

It is this happiness that is my own nature that I experience when I go to sleep. That is why everybody likes to sleep. If sleep were an unhappy experience, no one would happily go to sleep! One is reluctant to get up because one does not want to take up the cross which one laid down the previous night. There is total absence of sorrow in sleep. In that sleep there is nothing. You are with yourself. That self seems to be all happiness, and therefore there is no difference among people who are asleep. There is no difference between a king's sleep and a beggar's sleep. Whether it is of an ant or man, the experience of sleep is the same. All forms of duality vanish, all differences resolve in one blanket experience of sleep. There is no difference because there is a total absence of anything. If you experience any happiness there, this happiness is yourself.

Whenever your mind does not project, does not lorg for anything, there is happiness. In the interval between a fulfilled desire and before the cropping up of the next desire, you are happy. Who does not sing in the bathroom? You don't do it either to please yourself or to please others. Because you are happy you sing: it is but an expression of happiness. At that time, the mind does not demand anything: all the window dressings, the masks you had for people, are removed along with the dress. Your mind does not project; you are with yourself At that time you are happy. Therefore, *Bhagavān* says, a wise man is one

Prajahāti yadā kāmān sarvān pārtha manogatān
Ātmanyevātmanā tuṣṭaḥ sthitaprajñas tadocyate. (II-55)

The wise one casts away all desires. He is happy not because of any reason, but because happiness is his nature. The fire is not hot because of any reason, but it is its own nature. Water may be hot because of fire, but fire is hot because it is fire. So too, it is against the wise man's nature to be unhappy; he does know that HE is the source of happiness, in any form of happiness.

A ripple in the ocean is not going to add to the fullness of the ocean. A big breaker in the ocean is also but an expression of that fullness. When you experience an object of your desire, the happiness that you get is like the wave on the ocean. Oceanness does not go away even when the wave goes away. Similarly, my fullness does not go away because my experience of happiness goes away. That one who recognizes the fact of his being happiness, that he is *Sat*, *Cit* and *Ānanda*—Existence, Knowledge, Bliss, is a wise man. He finds happiness not due to any reason, but he is happiness himself. No one can say or give a reason why the fire is hot, because it is its *svarūpa*, nature. There is a reason for one to be unhappy; it is due to ignorance, error, a worked-up emotion. Somehow he took a wrong turn; he has gone away from his home which is happiness. You cannot ask why your eyes see; that is the nature of the eyes, they are meant for that. You don't ask why the tongue tastes, because it is meant for that. You can always ask how and find out the process of perception. The wise man is happy, for he has recognized that he is *Sat*, *Cit*, *Ānanda*. That one alone is wise. All others are otherwise. He is called *sthitaprajñaḥ*—well rooted in himself.

The wise man is likened to the ocean into which rivers flow. The ocean remains the same; it does not get flooded because the rivers pour water into it. Because the rivers cease to flow, the ocean does not become less; even if you dam all the waters of the rivers, the ocean will not dry up. The ocean does not depend on any other source for water; even the clouds depend upon the ocean. All these rivers are possible because of this ocean.

Āpūryamāṇamacalapratiṣṭham
samudramāpaḥ praviśanti yadvat
Tadvatkāmā yam praviśanti sarve
sa śāntimāpnoti na kāmakāmī. (II-70)

The wise man is full: his heart is filled with happiness. Whether the various objects, through the sense organs, enter into him or not, there is no change in his fullness. His fullness does not depend on the arrival of something or the departure of something. With the world going with him, he is happy. If the world does not care for him, he is still happy with himself. All that he wants he gets, he is happy; all that he wants he does not get, still he is happy. Generally, if all what one wants at a given time one gets, one is happy, and unhappy if one does not get them. Such a one is only a *samsāri*, a *kāmakāmī*, desirer of objects. He is like a pond, while the wise man is like an ocean. If rains do not happen, the pond goes dry; if the water is more, it breaks. For such a *kāmakāmī*, a man who desires objects for his joy, when he gets them he is very happy; so happy that his heart does not stand it and he gets a heart attack. When he meets with a failure he cannot stand, he has another heart attack!

The wise man does not depend upon anything for his happiness. Therefore, he is not afraid of the world. Describing such a wise man, Kṛṣṇa adds

Vihāya kāmān yassarvān pumāmścarati niḥspṛhaḥ
Nirmamo nirahankāraḥ sa śāntim adhigacchati. (II-71)

"A wise man is he who moves about in this world, never caught up in anything and is not afraid of anything. Like the air that moves about, he is *nispṛhaḥ*, free from attachment. He enters in any situation and gets out without any problem. He is free from the notion of I-ness and my-ness. He gains *śānti*, peace."

Kṛṣṇa was like this, always laughing. He was in all events, but still not caught up under. The Lord adds: Arjuna,

Eṣā brāhmī sthitiḥ pārtha naināṁ prāpya vimuhyati
Sthitvāsyāṁ antakālepi brahma nirvāṇam ṛcchati. (II-72)

Space in a small pot is the same as the big pot-space, which is the same as space. There is just one limitless space. The pot-space that recognizes that it is identical with the limitless space, it can no more feel limited. It knows it is only apparently limited by the walls of the pot. It knows even the pot is only inside the limitless space. This is the state of being, in which there is no limitation whatsoever, this *Brāhmī* state, connected to *Brahman*, limitlessness. It is not a state of experience; it is a state of mind imbued with knowledge. Because of knowledge of oneself, there is such a freedom. Once you gain knowledge, you cannot lose it. Knowledge is such that it cannot disappear, for ignorance cannot come back. Once ignorance is gone, it is gone for good. Therefore, once gained, *enam prāpya na vimuhyati*—he is never deluded. That person is full, not equal to anything; there can be no comparison for fullness. Similarly, he who recognizes himself as fullness, for him there can be no complex. He is not in any way inferior to anybody, even God. He knows himself as the same Awareness because of which even God is aware of His all-knowledge, and because of which man is aware of his limited knowledge. In Awareness there is no difference. This vision is called *Sānkhya*.

WHY KARMA YOGA?

Now listen to what Kṛṣṇa tells about *Karma Yoga*, or *Buddhi Yoga*, a *Yoga* of attitude in action. In the second chapter itself, the Lord introduces *Karma Yoga*. There is no question of escaping from action. You must necessarily act. Action cannot bind you; bondage is your notion. Don't be afraid of the world; therefore, *Uttiṣṭha yuddhāya kṛta niścayaḥ*—having resolved to fight, get up. No man can ever hope to escape from any problem. The very escape betrays the weakness of your heart. Arjuna, if what I told you so far does not go home, even though you may have the grasp of this, it is because

you are not ready for it. There are a number of things to be achieved by you. Do whatever *karma*, action, you have got to do, not like everybody else, but with a difference in attitude. This difference in attitude converts an action, which is normally binding, to a *Yoga*. *Karma Yoga*, generally translated as *Yoga* of action, must be understood as a *Yoga* of attitude. One cannot escape from action: Wherever one goes, action will be there. If you think you can get away from *Kurukṣetra*, and without any activity stay in Riṣikeś, there also you have to work for food, or at least you have to go and beg for food! All these are actions; only you give up a kingdom and start begging. You can act either for the sake of people, or for yourself. Either way action is involved. The problem is not action, but lack of proper attitude to action.

The world will be a trap or a beautiful thing according to your knowledge, your vision. You are a different person when you know that you are not the limited ego, but limitless Awareness. But if you don't gain and retain it in spite of your exposure to this teaching, the Lord says, "Do exactly the same things that you have been doing so far, but with a change in attitude." Doing action with this changed attitude is called *Karma Yoga*.

7

Karma Yoga, an Attitude in Action

A CASE FOR ESCAPE FROM ACTION

In the second chapter of the *Gītā*, the *Sāṅkhya*, *jñānam*, knowledge of oneself, was unfolded. The truth is that man is free from death, free from any form of limitation. What one ultimately wants to be in one's life is but oneself. What is sought after in life is the very nature of the seeker. I cannot seek happiness, for it is my nature. Thus knowing oneself, one gives up one's desires for becoming happy. Kṛṣṇa concludes the chapter by *Sarvān kāmānvihāya nispṛhaḥ śāntim adhigacchati*—the one who has given up all desires, who is free from attachment, gains tranquility.

Arjuna takes it literally that one should give up desires to be happy. There is a lot of difference between his understanding and what Kṛṣṇa meant. The latter says that the wise man knows that the truth about himself is happiness, and grows out of the desire to become happy by gaining an object of desire. He does not depend for his happiness on the presence or absence of things, or fulfillment of desires. Arjuna thinks that if he gives up desires he will be happy, as though one can give up desires. He says, "*Bhagavan*, I want to be happy. The world does not have any content of happiness. Objects don't have happiness. I seek happiness. If that happiness is myself, according to you, naturally should I not turn my back to the world and seek inside to discover the happiness? Should I not quit the world, leaving it for those who are interested in it, shut off my sense organs, go to a quiet place, meditate so that I can discover happiness that I am?" At the same time, *Bhagavān* has also told him that he must act. The Lord has said, *Karmaṇyevādhikāraste mā phaleṣu*—you have a choice

only in the action and not in the results; *Mā te sangostu akramaṇi*—may you not be attached to inaction. He asked him to fight with an attitude of *Yoga*. If he wins, he will enjoy the kingdom, and if he is killed, he would go to heaven. Therefore, the Lord says, *Yuddhāya uttiṣṭha*—get up to fight. Arjuna is confused. He therefore asks a question

Jyāyasī cet karmaṇaste matā buddhir janārdana
Tatkim karmaṇi ghore mām niyo jayasi keśava. (III-1)

"O Lord! You are confusing me. You praise *Sānkhya* (knowledge to the skies, comparing the wise man to the ocean; you say his heart is full and he does not depend upon anything. At the same time, you also say, *Tasmāt yuddhāya uttiṣṭha*—therefore take up the weapon and fight. You say, *Karmaṇyeva adhikāraste*—you have choice only in action. I don't understand this at all. If I am interested in *śreyas*, why do you ask me to go out and act in the field? If you ask someone to know and some other to do *karma*, it is fine. How can I retreat into myself and still be with myself in the battlefield? If knowledge is preferable to action, why do you lead me into this act of fighting?"

Vyāmiśreṇeva vākyena buddhim mohayasīva me
Tadekam vada niścitya yena śreyohamāpnuyām. (III-2)

"Your words seem to confuse me. Please tell me only one thing, gaining or knowing which I will gain *śreyas*. Do not tell me both action and knowledge are necessary. I am not interested in both. I am interested in *śreyas* only. I am your student. Tell me what is necessary--*Sānkhya*, knowledge, or *karma*, action; they are opposed to each other.

"*Karma*, action, will bind me, and *Sānkhya*, knowledge, free me. You say, *Karmaṇyevādhikūraḥ, mā phaleṣu*—you have choice only in action and not in results. How can I do an action not caring for results? If I do any *karma*, action, it is only for a result; if the result is not there, why should I perform action? Even a madman, who talks to himself, expects his

own results. He perhaps sees an audience which is not, and perhaps gets applause too. Even a fool does not engage in action not keeping in mind the results. When I perform action expecting a result, I am going to be bound. Why? The very expectation will make me judge the result. According to my expectation, the judgement of the result is going to create in me a reaction. I will judge myself as a failure or success based on the result. This sense of success and failure I cannot avoid. Without action I cannot remain; without expecting the result I cannot perform action, and so I cannot avoid a mental agitation. Therefore, if I don't perform action, there will be no failure or success. So I will keep both depression or failure and elation or success away, and keep myself going. In doing action I have to encounter problems and tension, and finally get only a sense of failure, or frustration. Why should I act and disturb the hornet's nest of reactions? I would rather repair to a quiet place, stop all action, close my eyes and contemplate. That is the best thing to do. Therefore, O Lord, a life of renunciation is the best for gaining *śreyas*. It is not intelligent to go about in the world doing things.

"You have already taught me I am *Sat Cit Ānanda*—Existence, Knowledge, Bliss. To own this up, there must be a life of contemplation where no duties are involved. That is what I think is right. But you are asking me to do action. This will lead to result, judgement, reaction, problems. I will be missing myself all the time; there will be no occasion to contemplate myself or God. So I do not understand why you engage me in action. You decide and tell me what is right for me, action or renunciation."

THE PROBLEM—MAN'S PRIVATE WORLD OF LIKES AND DISLIKES

Man lives in his own private world; the public world is not known to him. This is due to one's own conditioning, or conditioning brought about on him by society, by culture, by even religion, by parents, and by teachers. He is very definite

about what is right and what is wrong. These DEFINITE right and wrong, *dharma* and *adharma*—the do's and don'ts—are great conditionings if they are not assimilated properly. Each one picks up in addition to *dharma* and *adharma* his own likes and dislikes. The objects one considers as valuable, in whose gain one's life will be pleasant, are the objects of one's like. There are objects and beings in whose presence one will be uncomfortable, and they are objects of his dislike. Again, there are objects and beings to which one is indifferent. Therefore, what one sees is only a world of his own likes, dislikes, and of objects to which he is neutral. The activities of life, expressions and pursuits in life, are always governed by these likes and dislikes.

When one looks, one does not see an object as it is, but through a mind colouring the objects by peculiar likes and dislikes. One may have a liking for jasmine and hatred for a rose, for no sin committed by the rose! All flowers are there for your appreciation. Rose is not jasmine; these are just two objects; one is not superior to the other, but only different from the other. All enjoy certain peculiarities: a rose is a rose, jasmine is jasmine, a mountain is a mountain, and a squirrel is a squirrel. A mountain cannot crack a nut, nor can a squirrel carry a forest on its back. But man does not look at the world as it is, not as it presents itself, but colours it. You look at a red rose and say, "I love the rose, but I wish it were white." The more sensitive a man is, his likes and dislikes become finer. A sensitive person, a cultured person, has choice in everything, including different shades of one colour. He may have his own choice of a shade, but if he dislikes another shade of the same colour, he no more sees the colour as it is! Thus all objects of the world are reduced to definite likes and dislikes. When he moves in the world, he is not moving in the public world, but in a private world. He is not living in this objective world, but is living in a world of fantasy, a world of fancy. If he is living in this public world, should he not take this world as it is? Why should he look at this

world through his goggles of likes and dislikes? Many of his likes and dislikes he may not even be aware of!

Again, an object of love today becomes an object of hate, dislike, tomorrow. An object of dislike can become an object of like; an object to which one is indifferent can become an object of love in the future. Suppose you have an old vessel which you don't even care to look at. Once you know it has a great antique value, your attitude changes totally. This is the lot in one's life all the time. All the pursuits of man depend upon the present available set of likes and dislikes. Hence his gaze of the world is conditioned by likes and dislikes.

Why does a man have these likes and dislikes? Because he thinks he will be comfortable with, or happier by, acquiring those objects he likes and getting rid of the objects he dislikes. Man can be uncomfortable with many small things, beginning from gray hair. Even his own physical body is not spared; he does not like his nose and goes for plastic surgery, and then feels that the old nose was better!

Man has been growing with likes and dislikes all along his life. It is one thing to have likes and dislikes, but a different thing to have a value for likes and dislikes. If he has a value for likes and dislikes, how can he ever give it up? If he does not give up his likes and dislikes, how can he see the world as it is?

If in this world he is cheated, it is not due to the world, but due to his own fancies. Even God cannot make the man happy who lives in his private world of likes and dislikes. He can accuse the world. But even while he accuses the world, three of his fingers accuse him! Before he accuses the world, he should first remove all his fancies. The world makes him unhappy because he looks at it through these coloured goggles of likes and dislikes. Till they are neutralized, he cannot be objective.

How can he neutralize his likes and dislikes? When a like is unfulfilled, man undertakes an activity to satisfy that. He cannot pull out his likes and dislikes like the weeds in a garden. We are generally asked to give up likes and dislikes. But man

cannot do it because he is likes and dislikes. It is not like a shirt or a hat to remove; likes and dislikes make up what he is. They are ingrained in him, forming the very fabric of his personality. So it is said in the *Gītā* that when you perform an action goaded by your like, if you do not react to the result when it comes, your likes are neutralized. The result is rarely in accordance with your expectations. If the result is better than you anticipated, you think you are successful. You feel elated. Suppose you expected so much, but get only this much. Then you dub yourself a failure. But if you take the results objectively, then your like or dislike cannot create any problem for you in terms of sorrow, failure, or any other negative feeling. Both likes and dislikes are defused time bombs not capable of causing any harm.

HOW LIKES AND DISLIKES COME IN THE WAY OF KNOWLEDGE

Likes and dislikes do not let the mind listen, and so one does not gain knowledge. To such a man, full of likes and dislikes, if I say, " You are *Sat Cit Ānanda*—Existence, Awareness, Bliss," he may perhaps see what is being said. Because his mind is relatively free when held in attention, his likes and dislikes do not bother him, and thus the mind becomes a learning mind. It is only the glory of the *S'āstra* that he is able to see and appreciate. Those moments of learning about what he really is, glimpses that he gains of his real self, get isolated from his personality. And what remains is only a personality controlled as before by likes and dislikes. He may even think that all this looks like hypnotism. He cannot own up the teaching that he is limitlessness and he is happiness till his likes and dislikes are neutralized. Arjuna was afraid of action, not because of action; not even results were his problem. But his reaction to the results was the real problem. The fear of his reaction to the results of his actions wanted him to desist from action and think of renunciation. He could not appreciate that action with a change of attitude is necessary to neutralize his likes

and dislikes. Only when the mind is relatively free from them can he appreciate the *Sānkhya*. So he thinks that Kṛṣṇa confuses him. *Bhagavān* replies to this,

Lokesmin dvividhā niṣṭhā purā proktā mayānagha
Jñāna yogena sānkhyānām karma yogena yoginām.
(III–3)

"Listen, there are only two types of pursuits. One is a life of renunciation and seeking knowledge, and the other is a life of action seeking the same knowledge. Action is involved in one, while in the other mode of life action is not involved. In both modes, what is sought is only freedom. Who is to decide which one should take? If you are already contemplative, there is no need for you to take a decision. But nobody can ask anyone to be contemplative. No one can ask one to appreciate the beauty of a flower or ask one to love! These capacities cannot be made to order, but must be discovered. You cannot adopt a contemplative life by merely giving up possessions. You will only deny yourself whatever you had, perhaps become lazy. You cannot create a contemplative attitude. It is natural and can be discovered if only you can see that likes and dislikes have no hold over you. As long as these taxing likes and dislikes have a sway over you, you cannot be contemplative.

Let us say you go to a quiet place near a mountain. A nice river is flowing by, trees are all around, birds are flying, everything is beautiful, you don't seem to desire anything. At that time, for you the world is beautiful. You seem to have settled accounts with the world for the time being. You feel very happy. This is not a different person; it is the same " you " who used to come with a million complaints for a simple " How do you do?" All your complaints seem to have disappeared. Why? When you saw the mountain, you didn't want that to be different, you did not want it to have an icy peak. Had you desired that, you would not have been as happy as you were. The mind accepted it as it was, took the river as it was;

it didn't want the river to flow faster or slower, did not want the sky to be different or the birds to be different. You yourself did not want to be different. Had you felt the need for someone to talk to, the beauty would have been lost. Here, in this moment, all your likes and dislikes are resolved. You are peaceful and happy. That state of mind is the one conducive to contemplation."

The objective world that you see does not create any problem for you. The problem therefore is caused only by the taxing mind. It is that mind that makes one different. Man has got infinite likes and dislikes. The first dent he can make on these likes and dislikes is to know that he is different. "He" is not having any likes and dislikes. That is why *Sānkhya* was told first. Then the method to neutralize likes and dislikes by an attitude is being presented. This ehange of attitude is told because he is not contemplative.

KARMA YOGA TO NEUTRALIZE LIKES AND DISLIKES

Action binds a person by his own likes and dislikes, and perpetuates bondage only if the attitude is not proper. In the second chapter itself, therefore, *Karma Yoga* was told: *Yeṣā têbhihitā sānkhye buddhi yogêtvimām śṛṇu*—you have been taught knowledge; now listen to *Buddhi Yoga*, a *Yoga* of attitude to action. In the third chapter, when Arjuna asked, "*Ghore karmaṇimām kim niyojayasi*—why are you engaging me in this cruel action? Why not I renounce?", *Bhagavān* says

> *Nahi kaścit kṣaṇamapi jātu tiṣṭhatyakarma kṛt.*
> *S'arīra yātrāpica te na prasidhyed akarmaṇaḥ.* (III-5,8)

" No person can remain without performing action even for a moment. You cannot remain actionless even for a moment. You cannot continue you *śarīra yātrā*—your journey of the physical body, i.e., even growth and sustenance of the body are not possible if you don't perform action. You may give up kingdom, you may go to Riṣikeś, you may think you are going to lead

a contemplative life. Even breathing or eating is action. Even as a *sādhu*, a monk, you have to procure food, eat and masticate food! Even when you are alone, you have to breathe, you have to move; all these are actions. Hence *Nahi kaścit kṣaṇamapi jātu tiṣṭhatyakarmakṛt*—even for a moment one cannot be actionless. Hands and feet are given only to act, just like your liver and heart are given to act. It is childish to think of giving up action. In life, everything has got a role and he or one has got to play that role. Total cessation of all activities is not possible. Even a bolt holding a piston has a role; its role is that it should not move!

To be a renunciate is to be contemplative; it is not to stop all activities and be lazy. Merely stopping all physical activities will not assure you a contemplative disposition. You have to neutralize the likes and dislikes which buffet your mind and goad you to ceaseless activity. If you continue to be active, you can remove these likes and dislikes so that you can become contemplative. Therefore, *Kounteya uttiṣṭha*—Arjuna, get up."

The Lord tells Arjuna how he can neutralize likes and dislikes by performing action. In the second chapter,

Karmaṇyevādhikāraste mā phaleṣu kadācana. (II-47)

Te Karmaṇi eva adhikāraḥ—you have a choice over actions, *mā phaleṣu*—but definitely not over the results thereof. You have no right over the result of actions. It is this sentence that has confused many a scholar; they say you should do action without expecting the result. How can one perform action without expecting results? Does it mean that Kṛṣṇa is talking without expecting Arjuna to understand? No one performs action without expecting results. I cannot take a step without expecting to move forward. I don't take a spoon of food if I don't expect to bring it to my mouth. This interpretation is not correct because it is not possible. What does it mean really? One need not search for the meaning elsewhere. Look at the sentence *Karmaṇyeva adhikāraste mā phaleṣu*

kadācana—you have got a choice over action, never over result of any action.

I have two hands. I have control over my hands while doing any action. In this I have choice. I can bring my hands together and say *namaste*, or clap. Is the result of action created by me? Over the result, do I have control? If so, I can say, "O hands! I will bring you both together forcefully, but don't make the sound of clapping." If I expect this and this does not happen, have I to conclude I am a failure? I cannot bring hands towards each other with a velocity and then not expect the hands to make the noise of clapping. It is not the problem of the hands but my foolishness to expect like this. When the action is performed, the result is accrued at the moment. You cannot avoid the *karmaphala*—the fruit of action, the sound of clapping. Similarly, one cannot jump out of a window and expect the result, falling, not to happen. Nor can he expect the gravity not to act at anything less than 32 ft./sec.^{2} just for him! This is not going to happen. Nobody in this world has created any law. We were born according to laws. We breathe according to laws. Performing action is because of laws. Reaping results are also according to laws. The world is governed by definite laws which we did not create. I only find myself in this world governed by laws in all respects. Things are placed intelligently. I perform action and there is a result. The relationship between the action and the result is governed by these laws for which I am not the author. The relation between *karma*—action—and *karmaphala*—result of action—is what we are trying to understand. You cannot even amend any law of nature; the new laws can be made only in Parliament and not in nature. The author of these laws must be someone whom we call God, called *Īśvara* in Sanskrit. It is due to His laws that I get the result. *Bhagavān* says, *Mā karmaphala heturbhūḥ*—may you not become the author of these. Over action you have the right, but definitely not over the result of action. Why? Because it is produced by laws which are not under your control.

But then, when I undertake something, I do expect a result because I have my own likes and dislikes. I want my likes to be fulfilled. The Lord says, perform action with expectation of results. Act in such a way that you can achieve what you desire. Plan and execute your work. For all your wishing and willing, if the result goes in sixes and sevens, if it is contrary to your expectations, don't dub yourself a failure.

"How can I prevent this reaction?" This is possible if you develop an attitude while performing an action, an attitude based on facts. If that attitude is based on a mere belief, once you know the fact is different, your attitude will change. Here *Bhagavān* says, "Have an attitude based on an understanding of the nature of actions and their results." Any action can produce a result that is inherent in the action itself. Don't expect what is not in the action. You are not an all-knower to act exactly the right way to get the desired result. You are not the maker of laws that govern the results of actions, nor do you know all the laws that come to play to yield a result. But you do know that things are moving according to laws and there is harmony. For any action, result always accrues. The Lord says, "These laws are My laws, therefore I produce the result of action."

You don't feel obligated to the banker or the postman when you get money every month, sent by your son. He is only the instrument who conveys the result. So also, the laws are only instruments.

There is a Lord behind the laws, and He gives me the result of any action. Even when you hear the words, the hearing takes place according to His laws. When I understand this fact, I develop a special attitude towards every result: that the result of every action comes from the Lord.

ATTITUDE OF GRACEFUL ACCEPTANCE—*PRASĀDA BUDDHI*

What is one's attitude towards a thing received from the Lord, say, from a temple or a church at Communion? The

same object is viewed differently when it comes from the Lord. Let us take a flower, a rose. When you pick that from your garden, you smell it and enjoy the fragrance. But the same flower, if you offer to the Lord at the altar in your house, your attitude to it is entirely different. You would not smell it but rather put it on your eyes. What prompted this change of attitude to the same object? For you, it is now a blessing from the Lord and not a mere fragrant flower because it was offered at His feet. The same attitude of reverence, or acceptance with a feeling of being blessed by the Lord, you have towards any object you receive in a temple or a church, be it ash, water, crystal of sugar, or loaf of bread. The mode of disposal may be different—you may apply the ash on the forehead and eat the sugar crystal, but your attitude remains the same. You are not concerned with who gives you this and how much he gives. For you, it is *prasāda*—a blessing coming from the Lord, and that is enough. The attitude you show towards the *prasāda* is called *prasāda buddhi*. For lack of a better expression, we can say it is graceful acceptance of whatever comes by with an attitude of reverence.

You perform an action, no doubt prompted by a desire or a like. You appreciate the fact that the result comes from the Lord, as it is shaped according to His laws. The result is thus a *prasāda* from the Lord. Once this attitude is there, you accept the result with open arms, you accept without any apprehension. Whatever you get as *prasāda*, you have the same attitude. This is called an attitude of *Yoga* towards the result of action. To the result of actions you cultivate this *prasāda* attitude. You appreciate that you did your best and that the result will always be proper and that you will not be deceived. With a limited mind, you can only estimate some result, but you don't know exactly what the result will be. Therefore, if results don't come according to your expectations, still you don't react because it is a *prasāda* from the Lord. Kṛṣṇa says in the *Gītā*

Prasāde sarva duḥkhānām hānirasyopajāyate.

Prasāda means absence of sorrow. Once it is accepted as *prasāda*, your mind assumes a *prasannatā*—cheerfulness. This cheerfulness is a blessing, as your likes and dislikes are no more capable of creating any reaction in your mind. When you perform an action and you get a result which is not what you expected, be it a success or failure, you accept it as *prasāda* your likes and dislikes are incapacitated.

ATTITUDE OF OFFERING TO THE LORD—*ĪS'VARARPANA BUDDHI*

There is another way one can defuse the effects of likes and dislikes on one's personality. This is based on the appreciation of the Lord even before you begin your action. Whatever activity you are engaged in, whether or not induced by your own likes and dislikes, you see the fact that every action is controlled by the laws which were created by the Lord. If I am a great musician, I see the fact that I did not come into this world and buy the voice. I came with this voice. I thank Him for providing me with the voice. The very act of singing is a thanksgiving to the Lord. I offer my action as an offer to Him. At every turn I can see His hands. I came only with the lungs. I saw air with the right proportion of oxygen already provided for me to breathe. I appreciate this fact. A deep understanding can make one entertain this attitude of *Īśvarārpaṇa buddhi* in any activity he engages in. Developing this attitude serves as an effective antidote against the sway of the mind by likes and dislikes even while I perform an action. The Lord will say later in the *Gītā* that any action can be an offering to the Lord as He is everything. If you cannot have an attitude of dedication while you perform the action, at least accept the result as a *prasāda* from the Lord.

Success and failure are only relative. Suppose you expect 50 percent profit and your partner only 15 percent in a venture, and the profit turns out to be 20 percent. You are depressed, while the other is elated. By a change of vision, the object, flower, gains a special status called *prasāda*. In the same way,

if you accept the result of your action, though the tangible result you gain does not change, your vision towards the result is changed. Says *Bhagavān*, " You don't change anything; don't get away from action, but keep doing the action. When you get the result, you have an attitude of *prasāda*. You appreciate the fact that the result of your action is due to the laws of the Creator which never fail. Your likes and dislikes cannot toss you between elation and despair if you accept the result with *prasāda buddhi*, an attitude of *prasāda*. Your mind can then accept any result without a reaction. Your mind, being freed from agitations, becomes contemplative. The world appears fine and beautiful. All that was taught, namely, that you are *Sat Cit Ānanda*, will be clear as daylight once your likes and dislikes are neutralized by this attitude of *Karma Yoga*. Threfore, do not give up action. Just change your attitude to action. and you will be a different person."

8

Action and Knowledge

WHAT IS *KARMA YOGA?*

Karmaṇyevādhikāraste māphaleṣu kadācana—you have choice only in action, not over the results thereof. This one sentence of *Bhagavān* explains what *Karma Yoga* is. One of the most confused compounds in Sanskrit is *Karma Yoga*. There are many notions about this. Performing action without expecting the fruit of action is *Karma Yoga*, is one. We saw how it is not possible to do action without expecting a result even for a madcap. Mere action does not make one a *Karma Yogi*, as some think. Then anyone in business attending five phones at the same time will be a great *Karma Yogi*! Some say *Yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam*—skill in action is *Karma Yoga*. This also is only a notion. If we accept this definition, then any mercenary killer would be a *Karma Yogi*. A *Karma Yogi* may be efficient in action, but efficiency in action does not constitute *Karma Yoga*.

WHO IS A *KARMA YOGI?*

A *Karma Yogi* is one who performs action expecting a result, but accepts whatever result comes with the attitude that all results are shaped by the laws of the Lord and therefore the result comes from the Lord Himself. Anything that comes from the Lord is accepted with this attitude, an attitude called *Yoga*, with respect to action, *karma*. By this attitude he gains purity of mind.

Likes and dislikes hold the mind to ransom. One who hands over his entire life to likes and dislikes can have no peace, poise, or composure. If a person has to discover the beauty of himself, he should have a mind which is released from the

stranglehold of likes and dislikes. They are the enemies which condition the mind to react towards the result of action. When the result falls short of his expectation, he is bound to judge it as a failure. His sorrow and regret are reactions that his mind consequently undergoes. This is the problem. Action is not bondage. The result of action is not bondage. The reaction of the mind to the result of an action is bondage. To be free from this bondage, the feeling of being limited and sorrowful, one should develop the attitude *Karmaṇyevādhikāraste*—it is given for me to act. *Āgate svāgatam kuryāt*—I will accept whatever result comes, and *Gacchantam nanivārayet*—as things go away I do not hold on to them, seeing new things are coming. The one who has this attitude is called a *Karma Yogi*. If one appreciates the Lord even while he performs an action and offers it as a dedication to Him, it is called *Īśvarārpaṇa buddhi*. One with such an attitude is also a *Karma Yogi*.

THE EFFECT OF *KARMA YOGA*

The most natural question that would occur is that if I accept the result as *prasāda*, will there be any progress? There is no ground for this question. The Lord asks you only to accept the result without reacting. Only if you accept the result as it is can you learn from your mistakes. A reacting mind can never learn. It is too concerned with its own reactions of despair, frustrations, and helplessness to look at things objectively and learn. We say experiences teach, but if it is so, everyone should be as wise as Vyāsa*. Experiences don't teach because you react to the experiences. If you let them pass, assimilate them without reaction, then alone they can teach you. You become more frustrated or entertain more regrets due to experiences because you react to them. The more you react, the less you learn. There is no poise on your part to absorb that which comes; for this what you need is a nonreacting mind. Whatever

* Vyāsa—Author of the *Mahābharata*, the epic of which the *Gītā* is a small section.

you have learned in life, that learning has taken place only when your mind was abiding, nonreacting. Such a mind alone is in a mood to learn. However few and far between, in those moments of an abiding mind alone you have learned. You do not learn anything when your mind is angry, hateful, jealous; for such a mind there is no receptivity. Because of my reactions, experiences do not teach. That is why *Bhagavān* asks to knock off the reactions, accept the fact that the laws produce the results. The laws are not more considerate to one and cruel to the other. These are not man-made laws. There is no such possibility of the laws of the Lord being partial. We do not find Russian fire to be cooler than American fire, nor Russian electricity to be more powerful than Indian electricity! Universal laws govern these; they never fail. If the result is not according to your expectations, you accept it, change your course, and act again. If you happen to fail, still YOU are not a failure, you have learned from that. A man who acts always achieves. A man who reacts is mechanical, and is not alive. He is like a machine, programmed. Any reaction like anger, jealousy, etc., happens; these are mechanical happenings over which you have no control. Consciously if you are angry, you cannot be angry. You get angry, forget yourself and act, and before you can remember, your front teeth are gone! It is said, *Gurumapi dhikkaroti*—in anger man curses even his own teacher. The anger makes him forget himself. No one by choice becomes angry, hateful or jealous. He who accepts the result of his actions as they come, as a blessing, will be able to develop a nonreacting mind. If you accept anything given as *prasāda* in the compound of the temple or church, you can do it outside also.

In Indian culture you can see this everywhere. You see His hands everywhere and offer the results to Him. That is why the housewife offers the food she has cooked to the Lord before she brings it to the table. A house you build, you offer to the Lord. You buy a car, you do a *pūjā*. What is it that has not been offered to the Lord? Even when a dam is built, it is dedicated to the Lord. The secular State may not do it, but

the man-in-charge of the dam would have dedicated it as an offering to the Lord and performed some worship in private! Any small or large accomplishment is offered to the Lord. The first milk from the cow is offered to the Lord. This is the very fabric of our culture. This is *Karma Yoga*. This makes your mind nonreacting, an alert mind. You are no more impulsive.

Karma Yoga develops a mind which is non-projecting, a mind in which the teaching can go home. Such a mind alone can own up the Truth of oneself as unfolded by the teaching.

THE WONDER OF THE TEACHING

"When I tell you about yourself, Arjuna, it looks strange to you. When I say, *Vedāvināśinam nityam aja avyayam enam* —know this (yourself) as indestructible, immortal, unborn and mmutable, you seem to wonder. When I say that the Self is

Indriyāṇi parāṇyāhuḥ indriyebhyaḥ param manaḥ
Manasastu parā buddhiḥ yo buddheḥ paratastu saḥ.

(III–42)

"Beyond sense objects are sense organs, behind the sense organs is your mind, behind your mind is that *Ātmā*, the Self which is full and limitless, whose fullness alone manifests in your mind whenever you pick up any happiness—this is not clear to you. This is due to the reacting mind. Your mind is far too preoccupied with agitations thrown up by conclusions about yourself. So, I advocate *karma* for you as a means to purify your mind, rather than renunciation from all action and going to the forest. You must know what is good for you. Create first a mind that can own up what is understood. *Sanyāsa*, renunciation, can take care of itself. Because of an unprepared mind, this knowledge appears as strange, as a wonder to you."

About this "wonder", in the second chapter he says

Āścaryavat paśyati kaścidenam
āścaryavad vadati tathaiva cānyaḥ
Āścaryavaccainam anyaḥ śṛṇoti
śrutvāpyenam veda na caiva kaścit. (II-29)

Some perceive this knowledge as though it is a great wonder, because no one could suspect that he is happiness; that he is beyond time and space. It is really a wonder for him to hear this. He cannot believe he is that, with all his sins, impurities, problems and limitations. Even if he understands, it is still a wonder. Because all the time he has been conditioned into thinking he is sinful, limited. Every religion went on giving only promises, "You do this, you will get this." Someone now comes and tells him, " You need not do anything. You are *Sat Cit Ānanda*—Existence, Knowledge, and Fullness." It is really a wonder.

Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna, " Don't think that I talk about a private, personal knowledge; nor is it a private personal truth. Truth is not private. Knowledge of oneself, of the world, of God, is something that is not the personal property of anyone. It is as ancient as the creation. I did not discover this knowledge. It comes through *guru śiṣya paramparā*—teacher-taught lineage. It is a knowledge handed down from teacher to student. The student who is interested in gaining this knowledge goes to the teacher, serves him, asks him for the knowledge, and the *guru* teaches him.

Tadviddhi praṇipātena
paripraśnena sevayā
Upadekṣyanti te jñānam
jñāninas tattva darśinaḥ. (IV–34)

"May you know about yourself by serving the teacher with an attitude of surrender. Ask him about this knowledge with a desire to know. These wise men, the seers of the truth about oneself, will teach you this knowledge of yourself, that you are free from all limitations, you are existence, knowledge, fullness.

This knowledge you cannot hope to discover or intuite one day; it is not like an object that you can perceive. You can divide the cell and break the atom, but who is going to know about that ONE who is going about doing all this? Someone else has to come and tell him who he really is. This is knowledge of yourself, and for knowing this you need a teacher.

THE STORY OF THE MISSING TENTH MAN

The problem is more like the case of *daśamo naṣṭaḥ*—the lost tenth man. Once ten men, who were travelling together, swam across a river. On reaching the other side, their leader counted them; only nine were there. In whichever manner he counted, he could count only nine. They all searched for the lost tenth man, but their search was of no avail. The leader panicked. As he sat there crying, a wise man came by and enquired about the reason for their sorrow. They explained the problem that while coming they had lost the tenth man, *daśamo nāsti*. The wise man saw the group along with their leader, and smiled! He instantly understood the problem. "Don't worry, *daśmaḥ asti*—the tenth man is; he exists, he is." He added that the tenth man was right here, and that he could produce him.

The leader was happy. He called the others and told them, "*Daśmaḥ asti*—the tenth man is, he exists!" Previously, when he was saying *Daśamo nāsti*—the tenth man is not, he was an atheist; now he says he is an *āstika*, a believer. Though he has not seen the tenth man, yet he believes the old man. There is no reason to disbelieve because he does not say the tenth man is elsewhere, in heaven, and put him on a trip. Then it can be an eternal bluff; one must die to verify that! Once dead, he cannot come here to tell where he was. This does not solve the immediate problem. But the wise man said that the tenth man was right there, at that time itself. There is no basis for disbelief here. Therefore, he went along with him.

The wise man then asked all of them to fall into a line. No one knew how he would produce the tenth man from among them, but they obeyed. This is called *śraddhā*—faith. This

is not blind faith, bordering on superstition, but a faith pending confirmation. There was no reason to disbelieve. The wise man then asked the leader to come out and count. He counted, " 1, 2 . . . 9 " The wise man said, pointing to the leader, " You ARE the tenth man. " The leader immediately understood; he got the missing man. How did he realize himself to be the tenth man? By teaching. The words of the wise man revealed the fact that HE IS the tenth man. The seeker after the tenth man is the sought. As long as he seeks, he cannot get the tenth man. He can do anything, can stand on his head or eat boiled vegetables for his lifetime or meditate for hours, but the tenth man will still be missing. He can go to heaven or hell, still the tenth man will be missing. By any action he cannot find the tenth man. By the very seeking he is denying the tenth man; the very presence of the seeker is denial of the sought. If he thinks that he should discover the tenth man, that is enough; he will never find him. He cannot have the doubt that he is the tenth man because he has already concluded that he has to seek and get him. Therefore, someone else, the teacher, has to reveal to him the fact that he is the tenth man.

THE NEED FOR THE TEACHER

Similarly, having concluded that you are a mortal, limited and sorrowful, how can you even think that you are the sought, the one free from all limitations? You cannot. Someone has to teach you, to make you see that all your search is useless. What you need is to know who you are in reality; then alone all seeking drops. Therefore, go to a teacher and he will teach you to discover who you are, that all that you seek in life is yourself. Showing a " word-mirror ", he will throw you on your own lap and make you see yourself. If someone asks when and where you discovered yourself, you may smile and be silent. Thus *Vidyā vinaya sampannaḥ*—the wise man is modest. The leader realized what a fool he was to have searched for himself.

Arjuna had already found in Kṛṣṇa his teacher when he asked him, "*S'iṣyasteham s'ādimām*—I am your disciple, guide me!" For others' sake, Kṛṣṇa says, "*Tadviddhi praṇipātena pariprasnena sevayā*—may you gain this knowledge from a teacher by serving him and asking for this knowledge." As we have seen, however ancient or well-versed he may be, he must have a *guru*, a teacher.

WHO IS THE FIRST GURU?

You do not doubt if your great-grandfather was there or not though you have never seen him; the very fact that you are, proves this. The existence of your great-grandfather is thus not a matter of belief. Similarly, the very fact that the knowledge is available now shows that it has been there and been handed down from teacher to student. It is not a product of a lotus-eater's intellect. It is not a question of belief, but one of seeing, knowing, understanding.

To ask, "Who is the first teacher?", is like asking, "Who was the first father?" Every son may become a father, but himself is the son of his father. His father was also a son. Then who was the first father? You may go down along the line of evolution, but still you cannot say who the first father is. You can only say he is as old as the creation itself, or he came along with the creation, or the first father is the Lord himself. So too with the teacher. Every teacher was a student. The first teacher must have been the Lord Himself. Kṛṣṇa adds

> *Imam vivasvate yogam proktavānahamavyayam*
> *Vivasvān manave prāha manurikṣvākavebravīt.* (IV–1)

"This knowledge I have been talking is nothing new. It has come from the beginning of creation. In the solar race, Vivasvān, the sun, was the first to receive the knowledge. He taught it to his son, Manu, and he taught this knowledge to Ikṣvāku."

The Lord adds

Evam paramparā prāptam imam rājarṣayo viduḥ
Sa kāleneha mahatā yogo naṣṭaḥ parantapa. (IV-2)

"This teaching, handed down from the teacher to the student, the kings and wise men knew. But it looks strange to you now because it is not in circulation; it is lost because people like Duryodhana are more rampant now! Like a solar eclipse, this knowledge is eclipsed for the time being. So this knowledge, though looked upon by you as a wonder, is an old knowledge, as old as the creation itself."

PRAISE OF THE KNOWLEDGE

In praise of this knowledge Kṛṣṇa adds

Nahi jñānena sadṛśam pavitram iha vidyate.

"It is something for which there is no equal because, gaining this, everything is as well gained."

The *S'ruti* says, *Yasmin vījñāte sarvam vijñātam bhavati*—knowing this, everything is known. How is this possible? It is not that all kinds of knowledge will at once dawn on the wise man, that he will know everything from alchemy to astrophysics. It only means that everything is as well known. If one drop of water is known, the entire ocean is as well known, Similarly, if there is something limitless in which alone the sun, moon, star and everything is, and that limitless you are is known, then everything is as well known. In that knowledge I gain a fullness, a total freedom from limitation. There is nothing equal to this knowledge because this one knowledge releases me totally from the notion that I am limited, ignorant.

Any other branch of knowledge opens up new areas of ignorance. Thus the more you know, you only come to know how much you don't know. The more you explore and know, the less sure you are! An eighth grade student would say, if an object is tossed up it would come down at 32 ft./sec.^{2}. The

same student, when he becomes a research scholar in physics, will say that PROBABLY it would come down at 32 ft./sec.[2]. Because he knows the interfering factors, he will add the word probably. This is not a criticism of modern science, but an illustration to make you understand that this is the nature of knowledge. All knowledge gathered is only workable knowledge; no final word has been said in any discipline of knowledge we have gathered thus far in the objective world. It is always subject to revision. That means, ignorance still remains, as a knowledge subject to correction is not knowledge. But this *Sānkhya*, knowledge, alone can release the person totally from ignorance. He is *Caitanya*, limitless Awareness; he knows it and is released from all notions of limitation. Hence, *Nahi jñānena sadṛśam pavitram vidyate*—there is nothing equal to knowledge. To gain this, one's mind has to be abiding. So don't think action binds you and renunciation is better to gain this knowledge. To obtain this abiding mind, you need action as a means to neutralize the impurities of the mind.

ACTION AND ACTIONLESSNESS

About action and actionlessness, Kṛṣṇa says

> *Kim karma kimakarmeti kavayopyatra mohitāḥ.* (IV-16)

"Even scholars are unable to know what is action and what is inaction. But you seem to have concluded, simplistically, that doing anything is action." He adds

> *Karmaṇohyapi boddhavyam boddhavyam ca vikarmaṇaḥ*
> *Akarmaṇaśca boddhavyam gahanā karmaṇo gatiḥ.* (IV–17)

What is meant by inaction and actionlessness is to be understood because it is not easy. The Lord says that the notion that non-performance of any action is freedom, is not correct. We can define action as *Calanātmakam karma*—where there is motion, there is action; and *Acalanātmakam akarma*—where

there is no motion, there is actionlessness. Arjuna, you say you want to renounce all actions so that you can be free from all desires, and then you will become full. Is this true?

You perform an action so that you can achieve a thing. Without a desire, you don't perform any action. The desire is always to find some happiness in the future by achieving something. The basis for desire is your thinking that presently you are not happy, and that you will gain happiness by this action. Therefore, by merely giving up action, how can desires disappear? This reverse logic does not work. If you give up action, desires will still remain, all your likes and dislikes will be with you. If with desires you give up action, you become a lazy frustrated man, posing yourself as a *Mahātmā*, a great soul! Do you prefer this? If you take *sannyāsa*, the life of a renunciate, you will perform no action, but you cannot be happy with yourself because desires are still with you. You cannot get rid of, or try to fulfill them by action, as you have already given up all activity. It is a situation ideal for frustration. Thus you will only be a frustrtaed *Mahātmā* even if you take *sannyāsa*—it will not help you gain knowledge.

Bhagavān says

Na karmaṇāmanārambhāt
naiṣkarmyam puruṣośnute
Na ca sannyasanādeva
siddhim samadhi gacchati. (III-4)

A man does not gain *naiṣkarmya*—the state of actionlessness, by not initiating any activity. Also, by merely renouncing all action, he does not gain this (actionlessness). Because, *naiṣkarmya*, actionlessness, is from a different standpoint. The very fact that you want to renounce is because you take yourself to be a *karta*, an actor, a doer. Are you an actor? Nobody can renounce what he does not have; you cannot renounce the horns on your head! You cannot sharpen your horn or decorate your tail. Only with things you have you can change or modify. You say you want to give up action,

because you think you are an actor. When you are not an actor, how can you give up? Bhagavān says, you are NOT an actor.

YOU ARE ACTIONLESS AWARENESS

We go about thinking that we do, we act, we think, etc. These are just notions—when questioned and analyzed, they disappear. Let us take a single act, say, speaking. When you say that you are a speaker, if you are confronted with the question, "Are you the speaker or the thinker? Tell me one thing," you cannot answer definitely. To admit that you are the speaker means you speak without thinking! If we accept the statement that you are the speaker, the next question is, what about the voice box? Without this you cannot speak. The voice box also you are; the sound that comes out also you are; the thought behind the intelligible sound also you are. Before the thought arose in your mind, were you there or not? You were. Then who are you? You can say you are the mind. But in deep sleep the mind does not think or cognize, but still you know you were, even while sleeping. So you have to admit that you are really not the speaker, listener, thinker, etc., but a conscious being capable of thinking, listening, doing, etc. Does that conscious being act? No. You are that being, that Awareness in whose presence your mind works, sense organs work, and perform actions. When you say, "I do," the I, the Awareness, does not perform any action. The eyes see, thoughts move, all are in Awareness, that is, Consciousness. It is That in which they are all resolved.

Calanātmakam karma, action is motion. All these actions stand in I, the Awareness, Consciousness, who is aware of time and space. The planets move, air moves, the man moves, women move, all move only in Awareness. But I, Awareness, does not move. It never performs any action. It is always present, in which even time goes on moving. So, Awareness was, is, and shall be. Awareness is thus timelessness. It is motionless. *Sarvagatatvāt*, because it is all-pervasive; it

cannot move. If space itself is in Awareness, where can Awareness move? If it is motionless, it is actionless. *Acalanātmakam akarma*, where there is no motion there is actionlessness. So, you ARE actionlessness. I am the Awareness in which all things exist. Therefore

Karmaṇi akarma yah paśyet akarmaṇi ca karma yaḥ
Sa buddhimān manuṣyeṣu sa yuktaḥ kṛtsna karmakṛt.
(IV–18)

The wise man is one who is able to see action in actionlessness and actionlessness in action. What is known as *akarma*, actionlessness, Awareness, in that alone every *karma*, action, takes place. The Self does not perform any action, but all actions take place because of this *akarma*—actionlessness. This is my real nature. I am Awareness. Arjuna, the one who appreciates oneself as actionless, does not take oneself to be an actor in spite of doing action. One knows, *Indriyāṇīndriyārtheṣu vartante*—mind, sense organs, all do their respective jobe; one is blessing all of them; in one's presence all activities take place. One knows that one does not perform any action. When you are such a renunciate, how and why do you call yourself actor? Only if you are actor can you renounce, but you are not. Then, how can you be a renunciate? He is a wise man who knows himself in this manner; that man alone is called a liberated person. So you cannot become a wise man by merely giving up action. Therefore, get up, *Yogamātiṣṭhottiṣṭha*—get up and fight!

If you are unable to discover this actionlessness, then continue performing action with the right attitude of *Yoga*, so that your mind will become pure, so that you can discover what has been told.

AN ILLUSTRATION OF ACTIONLESSNESS

A man once went in his chauffeur-driven car to a neighbouring town and, upon arriving, said to his friend, "I did sixty mph." His friend who heard this did not wonder, though he knows his

obese friend cannot even walk sixty steps! He understood that he came in a car, and the car did the moving while he relaxed in the car. *Naiva kurvan na kārayan sukhamāste*—without doing anything nor causing anyone to do anything, in the back seat he happily relaxed! Still the friend says he did sixty mph with reference to the car in which he sat. From his own standpoint, he did not do anything. Thus, "I" Awareness never performs any action. I am always like the man seated in the car. I am actionlessness. The car is moving fast; so too, when the body works, it looks as though I work. When it talks, walks, etc., people think that I act. From the standpoint of the sense organs, I act; but from my own standpoint, I am actionlessness. One who knows this and lives this, he is a wise man; he is *sadā viśrāntaḥ*, always relaxed. He is too full to move. That person is indeed *kṛtsna karmakṛt*, he has performed all actions, he is a wise man. If you find this too difficult to understand, the problem is only the impurity of the mind, your likes and dislikes. They are the real enemies, not Duryodhana. So, "Arjuna, *Jahi śatrum mahābāho*—O Valiant One, destroy the enemy." For this you must act with the right attitude. Therefore, *uttiṣṭha*, get up!

Knowledge and Renunciation

ACTIONLESSNESS BY KNOWLEDGE

One who is identified with Actionlessness, Awareness, has a relaxed frame of mind. Action-free mind is recognized as a relaxed mind. *S'ānti*, *viśrānti*, peace and poise, seem to go with *akarma*, actionlessness. Arjuna recognizes this relaxed frame of mind, a contemplative mind, as a mind that is unconcerned with any undertaking, *anārambha*. Any undertaking involves concern and anxiety because one may or may not succeed. Therefore, there must be in one a natural anxiety; this tension is unavoidable if one wants to accomplish something. Why then undertake any activity at all and suffer? Give up all activities, contemplate upon what was told, and discover the full, complete being that you are. After all, what is the use of working, achieving and then trying to find how to get rid of all possessions, attachments, and bondages?

Thus Arjuna asks, in spite of being told that action does not bind, why at all should he act? He still does not see that the restless mind, which is a reaction to the result, is that which he is really afraid of, and not action *per se*. The problem is one's likes and dislikes. Whether one acts or not, these will haunt one. If with likes and dislikes one gives up action, one will only be an idler. If one acts with a proper attitude, an attitude of *Karma Yoga*, the very action will help one gain the poise one seeks by running away from action. He was also told that desire to renounce activity is born of a definite conclusion that you are an actor.

First Kṛṣṇa gave Arjuna this *Karma Yoga*, then He told him what is true renunciation. Giving up action is not renunciation, but in knowledge alone there is true renunciation. That

I am an actor is a conclusion. If you are not really the performer of action, you cannot give up an action that you don't do. This notion that you are the actor is not wrong; it is a mistake. In all actions you must discover yourself as actionlessness, *Karmaṇi akarma paśyet*—may you see actionlessness in action. When you say you perform action, see what it is that performs action. For action, there must be motion. The fact remains that you are aware of your thought, your decision, your will, your physical activities; then who are you? You can be but pure Awareness, in whose presence the deciding mind, thinking mind, willing mind, all act. All are possible because of whose presence, that presence is indeed Awareness, *Caitanyam*. Therefore, actionlessness is your own nature. "I" Awareness does not perform action. Thus may you see yourself as Awareness, actionlessness in the midst of all activity. Do not conclude first that you are an actor and then go about discovering actionlessness, when there is no action to start with. The one who does not perform any action may be mentally idling, and one is not relaxed. The wise man is ever relaxed, but may undertake activities. Though active, he is actionlessness. This is knowledge. Because one wise man is active and the other wise man is not active, seemingly, their wisdom does not change; but if you see the latter and give up action, you become an idler. A wise man is the one who has discovered actionlessness by knowledge.

Sarva karmāni manasā sannyasyāste sukham vaśī
Navadvāre pure dehī naiva kurvan na kārāyan. (V-13)

"Renouncing the notion of his being the actor, he sits happily in this city with nine gates, this physical body, neither doing anything nor causing anything to act." He alone is free from all actions. He knows that "I" am present all the time, in whose presence eyes, mind, everything functions. Because of "I", thoughts move, planets move. The whole time-space framework is within the scope of Awareness. Including the notion of nothing, non-existence, all these are in Awareness

alone. That Awareness cannot move because it is all-pervasive. Thus knowing, he is actionless and relaxed. This chapter of the *Gītā* is called *Jñāna Karma Sannyāsa Yoga*—renunciation of action by knowledge. Through knowledge you give up *karma*; by simply giving up action you only become a lazy man. If in actions you discover actionlessness, you are not afraid of action. You know that you need not give up action to discover that you are actionlessness. At this stage, a doubt naturally arises in one's mind. If one has to discover actionlessness by knowledge, then why should there be an order of *sannyāsa*, renunciation? Even the *S'ruti* talks of giving up all duties, actions, and taking up this order. What is its place? To this doubt Kṛṣṇa answered in the third chapter itself

Lokesmin dvividhā niṣṭhā purā proktā mayānagha
Jñānayogena sānkhyānām karmayogena yoginām. (III–3)

There are two styles of living, both of which help one achieve *śreyas*, liberation. One is a life of renunciation, and the other is one of activity. In both there can be release, and in both there can be bondage, depending upon your attitude. Arjuna naturally thinks, " I understand how I should act. But then you talked of another order where no action is wanted. He who belongs to this order gives up all action. He is considered a *sannyāsī*—renunciate. There is no concept of duty for him. Though everyone has got a duty, he does not have any duty. Why don't I too become such a *sannyāsī*?"

DUTIES, RENUNCIATION AND *SANNYĀSA*

In the Hindu society everybody has duties. It is a duty-based society, not a right-based one. A wife has got duty to her husband, and his duty in turn is to make her happy. Each performs duty and does not clamour for his rights. If both perform the duty, there can be no possibilities of fight. If one begins to claim his rights, and the other also claims her rights, there will be only a rub; only riots and no rights will be left. Man is a social being and not a loner. Therefore, he has duties

to the society, to the members of the family, to the country, to humanity, even to the elements: wind, fire, earth and water. To all these you are related, the Lord says. A man, even in matters like bringing up a child, has an attitude that it is his duty to bring out the best in the child. He does have a motive that the child would help him in his old age. This also is *Karma Yoga*.

A king is told that the kingdom is entrusted to him, and is asked to act as a trustee. It is his duty to govern the citizens. As a citizen, he has a duty to the country and so to the king. The whole life of a Hindu is but one of constant duty. You have duties even to the elements because you are partaking for your comfort from the sun, the wind, the earth, etc. You live mutually helping one another and so you have definite duties towards them.

You discover a joy in doing action. Things that are expected of you, you do them very happily, whether they are personal, expected by society, or enjoined by the scriptures. If you have a desire, want to achieve something, you act, keep on acting, but accept the result with *prasāda buddhi*. The result of your action will not bother you then. In the third chapter, Kṛṣṇa talks about the duties. The one who only takes and has no duty, no obligation to anybody, *stena eva saḥ*, he is a thief, he takes from others but does not give anything back. Without giving, investing, if you keep on taking, you are only a thief. Since the working of any society is duty-based, a man's duty is to keep on doing till you are motivated by a desire for *mokṣa*, liberation. Then you may say, " I don't want anything, *asmin amuṣmin lokevā*, here or hereafter; I don't want any security or pleasures. I am not interested in these, I don't seek after anything." After leading a life of *Karma Yoga* for many years, your attitude is changed. You are no more buffeted by likes and dislikes. You are dispassionate, you clearly see the only goal in life, liberation.

At THIS stage, a choice is given to you. You may do actions with the attitude *Kartavyam iti buddhyā*—this has to be done

by me and so I do it, pursue the study, and learn from a teacher. Like this you keep on acting in this world. Or, if you want to lead a life of study and contemplation alone, you become a *sannyāsī*, a renunciate. The whole society will support you.

A *sannyāsī*, renunciate, is one who has no participation in anything, has no obligation to family or society, is not governed by anybody. He has an obligation to himself to pursue his study and reflection and own up the fact revealed by the *S'ruti* that he is limitlessness. The society allows him to go ahead and discover whatever he wants to. Even the family permits him to live a life of contemplation, discovery. He may come back to teach the society. No *sādhu*—renunciate, starves to death. No *sādhu* also gave up everything with the hope that the society will support him! He is treated with reverence. In some parts of India, even today they are considered as walking God. In any country, if one is a monk, the society will not let him die. To anyone who wants to lead a dedicated life, committed to lead a contemplative life, dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge, such a life is there; that is the life of renunciation. This is what was said by *Bhagavān* in *Lokesmin dvividhā niṣṭaḥ*—there are two styles of living. Whether you lead a life of action with proper attitude, or a life of renunciation, both are acceptable.

PRAISE OF KNOWLEDGE AND ARJUNA'S DOUBT

Bhagavān tells Arjuna to perform action, though in between he praises knowledge! He says

> *Api cedasi pāpebhyaḥ sarvebhyaḥ pāpakṛttamaḥ*
> *Sarvam jñānaplavenaiva vṛjinam santariṣyasi.* (IV–36)

He says, "Even if you consider yourself to be the most exalted of all the sinners, even then, *sarvam vṛjinam*—this entire ocean of sin you will surely cross over by the small boat of knowledge." The boat is the knowledge, *Tat tvam asi*—That thou art. Don't condemn yourself. These sins belong to the actor but not to the actionlessness. If you discover yourself as action-

lessness, where is the sin? Don't condemn yourself as sinner. By knowledge you will cross over all sorrow. If you know what you are, the whole problem is solved. How? Like a dreamer who has committed multiple murders in dream is free from this on waking up, so too, you become free from sins.

He praises knowledge further: *Na hi jñānena sadarśam pavitramiha vidyate*—there is nothing equivalent to knowledge; *Jñānāgniḥ bhasmasātkurute*—the fire of knowledge burns totally every sin. Now Arjuna asks, "If you are praising knowledge, should I not give up everything, burn the boat, go and own up this knowledge? In fighting, what knowledge will I get? In weaponry and logistics, what new knowledge will I gather except the wails of the widows? Please tell me, why should I fight? I don't understand. Why shouldn't I take up the life of a renunciate?" Thus he asks Kṛṣṇa again in the fifth chapter

Sannyāsam karmaṇām kṛṣṇa punaryogam ca śamsasi
Yacchreya etayorekam tanme brūhi suniścitam. (V–1)

"I want *śreyas*. You decide once and for all and tell me, because, you ask me to do *karma*—action, and praise *sannyāsa*, —renunciation of action and discovering oneself. Why praise the life of renunciation and still ask me to do work? Both cannot lead to the same goal. Action is binding and actionlessness is releasing. Tell me one: which is good and which is bad for me? *Ekam brūhi niścitam*—tell me one, not a contradictory statement. I have not become wiser after the third and fourth chapters. Tell me clearly what is fit for me. I am ready to follow to the letter whatever you say."

RENUNCIATION AND ACTION—THEIR ROLES

This is how anybody would ask. But the very question stems from a confusion. The Lord cannot say which is better because there is no such thing as better. It is something like asking, "Shall I join college or get a degree?" This cannot be replied. Something you have got to do to get the degree, that is joining

the college. It is a means to an end. Because Kṛṣṇa cannot give him any choice, his reply only seems to keep the confusion going. He says

Sannyāsaḥ karma yogaśca niḥśreyasa karāvubhau
Tayostu karma sannyāsāt karmayogo viśiṣyate. (V–2)

Both *sannyāsa*—renunciation, and *Karma Yoga*—life of action, will give you liberation. Of these two, however, *Karma Yoga* is better than renunciation of action.

The very question stems from his non-appreciation of what is *karma* or what is *sannyāsa*. A teacher is not an adviser or a consultant. The teacher should not choose for the student, but only make him understand so that he does not ask this question anymore. Though *sannyāsa* is a lifestyle, it will be frustrating if one is not ready for it. What is purported to be achieved by that can be achieved equally well by the lifestyle of action, if the attitude is right. That is why he says *sannyāsa* and *karma*, the life of a monk and the life of activity, both will help you discover liberation. *Karma Yoga* will give you a contemplative mind. Then you will discover what is *sannyāsa*. Renunciation of action by knowledge, knowing that I am actionlessness, this discovery will come to you if you act with the attitude. That is why He says

Sannyāsastu mahābāho duḥkhamāptum ayogataḥ. (V–6)

Without living the life of *Karma Yoga*, attitude in action, if you come to *sannyāsa*, you are going to spoil the very order of *sannyāsa*. At least now you may not be a beggar. If you take *sannyāsa*, not prepared, you will be a beggar, a nuisance to the society and to yourself. *Ayogataḥ*, the one who has no *Karma Yoga*, will find it difficult to achieve *sannyāsa*.*

You really are not of contemplative nature; you are contemplative only now, while I am teaching. You have just now discovered the problem of limitation and sorrow, and are

*If you are fortunate to get a proper teacher and serve him, he should be able to help you even if your *sannyaasa* is without proper preparation.

seeking a solution. The likes and dislikes you have picked up till now are very much there in you. How can you drop them off so readily? Therefore, *sannyāsa* is not so easily to be taken. It is easy to give up, but difficult to grow out.

NYĀSA AND *SANNYĀSA*—RENUNCIATION

Everybody is interested only in *sannyāsa*, that is, not to possess anything except the minimum necessary for him. Your heart is only to get rid of; you keep only those things without which you will be unhappy. The moment you discover you don't need an object, you will give it up. Thus anybody's mind is only on renunciation.

What is needed most by anyone is freedom. This inner independence is *sannyāsa*, not an outward giving up of things you own. There is nothing wrong in what you have or how much you possess. Mere possession is not a problem; it is not bondage. But if you have a thing in whose absence you will be unhappy, you are bound. This bondage will give you only problems. You are then only a *samsārī*, not a *sannyāsī*. This dependence on things and beings for your happiness is called *samsāra*. *Sannyāsa* means renunciation.

In Sanskrit, any word is formed by rules of grammar, from the root, and you can see the word revealing the meaning. *Nyās*, the root, means to give up, renounce. *Nyāsa* means only renunciation. When we add the prefix *sam* (*samyak*), it becomes *sannyāsa*. *Samyak* means perfect. It inheres the meaning of any word: thus *tuṣṭaḥ*—happy; *santuṣṭaḥ*—very happy. Renunciation which is perfect is called *sannyāsa*. Now what is perfect renunciation? Is there any imperfect renunciation? No prefix is permitted without meaning. In the *S'āstra*, every word counts. We are interested in gaining knowledge, and every word has to be correctly understood. In the *Upaniṣads* even a conjunction must have a meaning.

There are two types of renunciation, *nyāsa* and *sannyāsa*. If one gives up something and goes about proclaiming that he has given up, it is only *nyāsa*. When a man gives up and does not have any sense of loss or relief, he enjoys *sannyāsa*. Giving

up is only *nyāsa*—it involves a sense of loss or a relief. Who doesn't know *sannyāsa*? We all were fond of marbles when we were young. To a young boy, if his father tells him not to play marbles anymore but play cricket, he would give up playing marbles. He would even give away all his marbles. He is a marble *nyāsi*, not *sannyāsī*, because, when he goes out in the evening, he would see his fellows playing marbles. He would stand there watching. He still has *rasa*, taste, for the marble play. When the other fellow hits the marble, he will also, with his finger, play an imagined marble!

Bhagavān says

> *Viṣayā vinivartante nirāhārasya dehinaḥ*
> *rasa varjam. . .* (II-59)

" Sense objects fall away from one who abstains, but the taste for them remains." From the next day, he would not go that side where the boys would be playing marbles, as watching them play would tempt him. Such a thing is not *sannyāsa*, but only a *nyāsa*. But when your grandson asks you to play marbles with him, you are not afraid to do so. Why? The presence of marbles doesn't mean anything to you now, and their absence also does not make any difference unless they are marbles made of gold! Here you are not a *nyāsī* but a *sannyāsī*. Ask your own mind; see if the marbles will ever be important to you now! The marbles don't bother you at all. You are not after them, not afraid of them. Kṛṣṇa talks of a *sannyāsī*

> *Jñeyassa nitya sannyāsī yo na dveṣṭi na kānkṣati*
> *nirdvandvo hi mahābāho sukham bandhāt pramucyate.*
> (V-3)

"Know him to be a *sannyāsī*, the one who is not after the world or runs away from the world. He does not long for or hate anything." Like that, you are a marble *sannyāsī* now. If your heart is such that the entire world means this much alone for you, if your heart has found that fullness, that maturity, the owner of such a mind is a *sannyāsī*.

Therefore, shunning away from action will not make you a *sannyāsī*. Kṛṣṇa adds

Yoginaḥ karma kurvanti sangam tyaktvā ātma suddhaye.
(V-11)

A *Karma Yogi* is one who performs action with the proper attitude for purifying his mind, for neutralizing his likes and dislikes. He who discovers for himself "I am a renunciate," is the real *sannyāsī*—renunciate. You should discover *sannyāsa* as an end, the recognition of yourself as a full and free being not depending on anything for your happiness; this is true *sannyāsa*. Yo cannot take *sannyāsa*; it has to be discovered. You cannot ask or order anyone to love, nor request any flower to bloom. So too, there is no way for you to take *sannyāsa*. You have to wait for it while performing actions with the right attitude. All things are there in this world to make you bloom into a flower of maturity. Such a mind, a composed mind, as a result of a life of *Karma Yoga*, will naturally find *sannyāsa*. Such a mind will be contemplative.

Naiva kincit karomīti yukto manyeta tatvavit
Paśyan śṛṇvan spṛśan jighran aśnan gacchan svapan śvasan.
Pralapan visṛjan gṛhṇan unmiṣan nimiṣan api
Indriyāṇīndriyārtheṣu vartanta iti dhārayan. (V-8,9)

"He is that wise man who, while performing all actions as seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, walking, sleeping, breathing, speaking, talking, letting go, opening and closing the eyes, in all of these, knows 'I' never perform any action. He knows 'I' bless the mind, which blesses the organs to do the work. 'I' never perform any action." In this manner, he knows himself to be a *nitya sannyāsī* a renunciate. For this, you must discover a contemplative mind for which *karma* is NECESSARY. So, roll up your sleeves and act with the right attitude.

10

Why Meditation?

Sannyāsa presupposes an abiding mind. Renunciation is not mental, not physical; nor is it just psychological. Renunciation is the very nature of knowledge. Knowledge of one's Self is called renunciation. The senses of *nitya yuktaḥ*, *sannyāsī*—the renunciate, abide. The nature of " I " is freedom from all forms of action—physical, perceptual and mental. The real meaning of " I " is actionlessness. The one who knows that " I " perform no action, though he may be physically engaged in action, is a wise man. So it does not take renunciation of action to be a *sannyāsī*, but KNOWLEDGE on one's part. However, there is a style of living, a life of renunciation, which is contemplative and not active. That is because once the mind is naturally contemplative, it will go for *vicāra*—enquiry, without any desire for action. Such a mind will gain freedom. Just because one is like this, if the other copies that lifestyle, it need not change his *antaḥkaraṇa*—mind. A mere change of lifestyle will not necessarily change the mind. But if one changes the mind, his lifestyle will change. There is a possibility of a change if one gives up bad company and goes to a company which is interested in *vicāra*—enquiry; there is a chance for him to change his thinking. But this change need not take place in all. So the Lord says that it takes a contemplative mind to be a *sannyāsī*—a renunciate. Taking *sannyāsa* may bring about destruction to the order itself. To lead a life of *sannyāsa* means a life free from likes and dislikes to a great extent. So he advises *Karma Yoga*.

There is no choice between a means and the end. Here the end is knowledge. For gaining this, you need a frame of mind. For gaining this frame of mind, *karma* is the means. Arjuna wanted a choice between the two, the means and the end.

There can be no choice between the two, and that is why the Lord did not give him any choice. You cannot choose to be contemplative by your will. You may sit and try, but you will do anything but contemplate. This does not deny you the chance of knowing what you are. No one is disqualified for this knowledge. In the sixth chapter, the Lord says

Ārurukṣor muneryogam karma kāraṇamucyate
Yogārūḍhasya tasyaiva śamaḥ kāraṇamucyate. (VI-3)

A life of contemplation is not one of merely closing the eyes and sitting at one place. A mind that is naturally more abiding than reactive, a mind that is able to see things clearly, a mind that has more time to stand and stare and not frown, a mind that is naturally smiling, not subject to easy excitement, such a mind alone is contemplative and it alone can learn. You cannot make a decision to be contemplative, like you cannot decide to be loving. You can decide not to talk or not to eat or to do *Yoga-āsanās*, but you cannot say from today, ' 'I will love." A man who is not contemplative cannot decide to be contemplative. So too, a man who is contemplative cannot but be contemplative wherever he is and whatever he does. If one does not have such a mind, then *Karma Yoga* is necessary.

EXPERIENCE IS NOT KNOWLEDGE

The life of renunciation is owning up your own nature, full and complete and not changing. Your mind is the cause of the estrangement. This is due to error and ignorance. This ignorance can be removed only by knowledge. For this, you have to listen to the teaching. You cannot stumble upon some experience which will tell you that you are *Sat Cīt Ānanda*. Experience you may have, but you will still try to go in for circumstances that lead you to such an experience. This is not going to give you knowledge. The problem is not of experience, but of lasting experience. Unknown-ness of happiness is not the problem, but having continuous happiness is the problem. Each one seems to know his own height. Without

knowing this norm, one cannot judge the obtaining frame of mind. Otherwise, how can one say that one wants a more profound existence? If any experience is not profound, you know it because you have experientially known that profound experience! This may be due to your discovering something beautiful which clears the mind for a time and you capture a moment of all joy. At that moment you ARE happiness. There is no one but you. All forms of duality resolve.

A great devotee goes to Badrīnāth from the southern tip of India. He reaches the temple of Badrīnāth on foot from Riṣikeś. He has overcome many seemingly insurmountable difficulties on the way, and reaches there totally exhausted. But he is very joyous as he was able to reach the temple. He goes inside and stands in front of the idol. In sheer joy of seeing the Lord of his heart, what does he do? He closes his eyes! Why should he come all the way from the tip of South India, with great difficulty, to close the eyes, standing right in front of the Lord? Well, he closes the eyes not because he is tired of seeing, or his eyes are tired, or that he has had enough, but this closing of the eyes takes place of its own accord. It is not because of any desire to close, but due to the fulfiillment of what he desired. He had been seeking Him. When the seeker came to the sought, there was a moment of fulfillment where the seeker and the sought got fused. The purpose of eyes is over, and the eyes close. In this moment of fulfillment, God is not seen as a deity, nor himself a devotee. Lord as a separate being disappears, resolves into the seeker. Both disappear. Duality disappears.

At any moment of happiness, the knower-known, or seer-seen duality disappears. Even when one appreciates a beautiful scenery, this duality disappears. In any profound experience, duality disappears. There is only one flame of *Advaita*—nonduality. This is nondual one, where there is no time or space limitation. In that moment of fullness, limitlessness is "captured"; there is nothing besides you. What obtains in that experience is not any object, or world, but yourself. It is a fullness that is not distinct from you. What has gone from you

is the taxing, demanding, desiring and willing mind. Nobody is responsible for this fullness. You ARE that fullness; it is not because of something that fullness comes. This is not known to man, and he seeks after this profound experience. These moments of experiences, though few and far between, give him a height to which he wants to measure up, reach that experience. He cannot settle for anything less. Every human heart is a perfect businessman. He will sell everything for that fullness, but it should come. But that fullness is his own nature—unfortunately he does not know this. For this, the teaching is necessary. Experience cannot give you knowledge.

WHAT IS KNOWLEDGE?

The teacher cites that moment of experience and tells him *Tat tvam asi*—That thou art; you are *nitya sannyastaḥ*—you are actionlessness. You do not depend on any other factor for shining. You are self-effulgent. You see things in the light of the sun or moon, or any source of light. Objects are revealed to your eyes due to the light of the sun. The sun shines because your eyes are bright. If eyes have no light, the sun cannot shine. Eyes shine. For a blind man, the sun does not shine. Eyes shine because the mind shines. Eyes perceive, ears hear, nose smells, tongue tastes, all these are possible because the mind is behind the sense organs. The mind shines because you see them, you light them up, you are the seer. You shine because of what? These shine because you shine; you shine because you cannot but shine—you are Awareness.

While showing the camphor flame to the idol, the *mantra* chanted tells this alone.

Na tatra sūryo bhāti na candra tārakam
nemā vidyuto bhānti kutoyamagniḥ
Tameva bhāntam anubhāti sarvam
tasya bhāsā sarvamidam vibhāti. (Katha. Up. II-2-16)

" There the sun shines not (in the Awareness, the Self, in you) nor the moon and the stars. Even the lightning does not illumine

you, what to talk of this light (lighted camphor)? By His light all these shine; all these shine after Him alone. By this chant we appreciate that because of ' you ' all these shine, and you are *Sat Cit Ānanda.*"

That person alone is considered a wise man who appreciates the fact revealed to him by the teaching, that he does not act. By His blessing, mind acts, it does its job, sense organs do their job. For appreciating this, you need a mind. *Karma Yoga* is the cause for gaining that mind. Thus Kṛṣṇa says

Ārurukṣormuneryogam karma kāraṇam ucyate. (VI-3)

Once you gain a mind, that contemplative mind is fit for *sannyāsa.*

SELF-CONDEMNATION IS A PROBLEM

Uddharet ātmanātmānam nātmānam avasādayet. (VI-5)

"Lift yourself up, do not condemn yourself."

Do *karma* with the right attitude, and you will gain that mind. There is no need for despair. There is no need for pain, frustration. With every result received, your mind becomes purer. Actions give a way for reducing likes and dislikes. Your mind becomes reaction-free when the result comes. This comes out of *Karma Yoga* which is otherwise called *Buddhi Yoga.* Thus likes and dislikes get neutralized. They don't hold your mind anymore. In time, your mind becomes naturally contemplative. Therefore, never look down upon yourself. Don't think you are not fit for *sannyāsa. Uddharet=Ūrdhvam-nayet*—place yourself up. *Ātmānam na avasādayet*—do not look down upon yourself. Self-condemnation is not going to help you at all. Others may condemn you, but you need not accept their words and look down upon yourself. This condemnation is only for ruining yourself. Why should you get conditioned that you are awful, a useless fellow? Right from childhood man is told that he is a fool. This conditioning

continues in the house, school and society. By this you get conditioned to thinking you are useless, *Na arhāmi*—I am useless. Even one who is boastful is feeling that he is useless, and so goes about boasting, this being another way of expressing *Nārhāmi*, I am useless! If you conclude like this, even God cannot help you. So, the Lord tells Arjuna, " Do not look down upon yourself—*Nātmānamavasādayet*. Thus Kṛṣṇa prepares his mind and tells him that all he is seeking is himself. If all about yourself is very clear, then you are liberated, you don't have anything to do.

WHY THE KNOWLEDGE DOES NOT STICK— THE PROBLEM OF HABIT

One finds all is clear, but doubts if the knowledge will ever remain with him. This is possible because the problem now is not one of ignorance or error, but one of habit.

Two problems are there—error and ignorance. The fear you sustain on seeing a rope as a snake is not only due to ignorance of the rope, but due to the error in the mind to cognize it as snake. When you know that it is only a rope, then this knowledge will remove at once the ignorance and error. But the tremor, the aftermath of fear, will remain for some time! Similarly, teaching will make you see that you are limitless; the ignorance and error go. If the teaching is there and the student is ready, he will see the fact very clearly. If the mind is not prepared, he can act with an attitude of *Karma Yoga*. The words would begin to make sense even while he is performing action.

Now the third problem is told. In spite of seeing it very clearly, once he is out of sight of teaching, he sees himself to be a different person. The limitations of the physical body hold him. They seem to overwhelm him. He does not seem to remember what was told to him. This is called a habitual error.

Suppose a born beggar wins a lottery. In spite of getting the money, due to forgetfulness he will definitely do things that

he would repent. He may have his own car, house, every comfort that money can buy. He may go out to the market in the car and get out with the car key in his hand to show that he is rich. But if he sees some people receiving something, his age-old habit will make him see what it is and he will even stretch out his hand to receive what is distributed! This beggarliness does not go away in a hurry. In his thinking, the beggar-turned-rich man is poor; he has not owned up the riches. To own up the riches he has to meditate upon himself, not as a beggar-self but as a rich-self. He should again and again see the fact of his being rich. He should retain his awareness of being rich, so that he need not think; he does not meditate any more that he is rich. He must assimilate the fact that he is no more a beggar, that he is rich.

Similarly, in day-to-day life, when situations come which are not convenient, only one's old beggarliness will come up. Always man has been picking up crumbs of happiness thrown by the hands of chance, called Dame Luck. Being conditioned like this, being a beggar for happiness all along, to him if he is told that all that you want fundamentally is you who are *Sat Cit Ānanda*, he understands, sees the fact. But like that beggar who is beggarly in spite of being rich, he too feels in the same old way. He feels he is still a demanding, depending person. This is a problem of habit. It has grown upon him over the years. It has to die only in time.

NEED FOR MEDITATION

He who sees the truth of himself at the time of his listening to the teacher, forgets himself when he is no more listening. He feels limited. This is purely due to habit. This habit has to be broken. For this, after *Sannyāsa Yoga*, the Lord advises meditation. Forgetting is a common thing in the life of a human. Thus, when you go to see a three-dimensional movie, though you know you are watching a movie, when you see a stone being thrown in the movie, you duck. At the moment of ducking, being totally identified with the movie, you forget your-

self. Similarly, one forgets one's essential nature when acting in the world. This abnormal behaviour is due to the sudden disappearance of self-awareness and becoming an impulsive being. Though you are rational all your life, you are used to these old habits, and you behave like this. How to get over this?

Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna to be with himself. He says, "For some time, shut off your sense organs; let this body be forgotten, including the pains and aches; consciously relax the body." For this, have a seat that is neither high nor low, a seat which keeps you from dampness. In those days, they had mud houses; so, to prevent dampness it is said

Sucau deśe pratiṣṭhāpya sthiramāsanam ātmanaḥ
Nātyucchritam nātinīcam cailājina kuśottaram. (VI-11)

Place a grass mat, place a deerskin, and over these place a piece of cloth. Otherwise, your attention will be only on the cramped leg! Then

Samam kāya śirogrīvam dhārayannacalam sthiraḥ
Samprekṣya nāsikāgram svam diśaścānavalokayan. (VI-13)

Sit well so that the physical body, neck and back are in a straight line, legs are folded and you are seated. Body is perpendicular to base, eyes closed as though your eyesight is falling on the tip of the nose. Here

Praśāntātmā vigatabhīḥ brahmacārivrate sthitaḥ
Manaḥ samyamya maccitto yukta āsīta matparaḥ. (VI-14)

Be not concerned about the world. You may have a lot of appointments to keep. You can do them later. This is an appointment with yourself. You call a truce with the world for the time being. Sense organs withdrawn, don't bother if the sounds are there.

You are withdrawn. The body is relaxed. Merely objectify the body; the body gets relaxed. You see your body as a stone statue as it were. Even this process relaxes the body.

One will not be able to say where the hands are; the exact position of the hands one may not be able to know. Then

Tatraikāgram manaḥ kṛtvā yatacittendriyakriyaḥ
Upaviśyāsane yunjyāt yogamātmaviśuddhaye. (VI-12)

Let the mind take to that thing which you have come to know. You know that you are all joy, all fullness, all awareness, all freedom, actionlessness, motionlessness, all peace, all silence. That motionless, formless, shapeless silence you are. Now let your mind be aware of this fact. Appreciate you are silence, you are awareness, silence, shapeless, formless silence.

S'anaih śanaiḥ uparamet buddhyā dhṛti gṛhītayā
ātmasamstham manaḥ krtvā na kincidapi cintayet.
(VI-25)

There is no necessity or time for you to think. You have thought enough for the time being. Appreciate yourself as formless, shapeless, all silence, awareness. Immediately there is a release. Mind is all silence—"I AM." When you think of silence, you cannot but be silence. This is the meditation that *Bhagavān* teaches.

11

Who is God?

SELF-KNOWLEDGE

An individual, a single isolated being, is not so isolated. He is essentially free from any form of limitation, bondage. The word "I", the first person singular, is more abused than used. It is more misunderstood than understood. It is taken as something other than what it is. Everyone has got erroneous notions about oneself. An error is due to ignorance. If I take a thing other than what it is, my notion is erroneous, false. If I take it as it is, it is called knowledge. Any form of knowledge which is subject to be reversed later is not knowledge, but only a notion. Knowledge, *jñānam*, is something that is not subject to negation or sublation on further enquiry. Knowledge should be final. Till then I may have only working knowledge of a given thing. Knowledge about myself is always getting reversed from time to time. Therefore, real knowledge of myself is not there. Thus, there is a necessity for one to know what one is. We saw this in *Sānkhya Yoga*, the second chapter of the *Gītā*.

THREEFOLD LIMITATIONS OF OBJECTS

Limitations are three-fold. Let us take any object, say, a rose. It has threefold limitations. It has a form occupying space. This rose is spatially limited, like your physical body. None can be at two places at the same time. This is called *deśa paricchedaḥ*—spacewise limitation. This flower has a timewise limitation. There was a time when this was not, and there would be a time when this will not be. This limitation is *kāla paricchedaḥ*—timewise limitation. Thirdly, the very object, rose, has its own objectivity, its own quality to be a

rose, which makes it distinct from all other objects. The rose has no tableness, bookness or potness. It has only rose-ness. What makes it a rose, that limitation is called *vastu paricchedaḥ* —objectwise limitation. Every object in creation suffers from these three forms of limitation. If I am the physical body, I am subject to these threefold limitations. I am here means there is spacewise limitation; I was born—that is timewise limitation. One can consider space as a horizontal limitation, time as a vertical limitation. Thus anything on the earth is on a cross; on this cross is also this *jīva*, individual, bound by time and space. I don't enjoy the advantages of a fish or bird. This is *vastu paricchedaḥ*—objectwise limitation. These three limitations I suffer. In addition, I have a few more things to limit me further—my thoughts, my knowledge, my sense organs, etc. Thus I am a limited being. This is all what I know. This body-mind-sense organ complex is called *kārya karaṇa sanghāta*. If I am this complex, I am a limited being. I cannot happily get along with this limitation. I want to be free. *Bhagavān* went on telling that all that you gain cannot give you freedom because any gain will involve some loss. Your freedom cannot be different from you. He made Arjuna see that he WAS different from his complex of body-mind-sense organs. If you take yourself as the subject, and if you know objects, you, the knower, is distinct from the known. With respect to yourself, you are *Caitanya*, and with reference to the objects, you are the knower. " I " Awareness has no form, and hence no limitation of space or time because even time " I " am aware of. So, this time-space limitation does not belong to me. I am full. Thus *Bhagavān* says, " Appreciate yourself as the one that I have unfolded; for, you are not limited; you are that complete limitless being. "

CREATION

This fact brings in a question: If I am Awareness, full and complete, and in Awareness is everything, then the whole thing I know or anybody knows is in one Awareness. It is the common basis. But then, who put the sun and stars there?

I have not done that. Who has made this cloud possible? Who has made the ocean and the seasons possible? Why should the earth move around the sun? I do see the creation which I know I have not created. I did not order for oxygen and then come to the world. There seems to be a world already meant for me to come into and enjoy. It seems to be a furnished house. The kitchen of the world can serve any food for anybody, whether it is a bee, a bug or a man. All beings have devices to survive and means for survival. Man comes with lungs and has air in the world to breathe. A fish comes with gills and can also breathe. Thus all seems to be very well-planned. Nothing is found lacking in creation.

Also, I did not create any laws of the world; I found myself born of laws. Things are born of laws and go according to laws. There seems to be a system in the world; in creation all planets move in orbits, everything seems to be just right. The distance between the sun and earth is just right to make life possible on this planet. I find meaning in everything, and nothing is redundant; everything seems to be well-designed, including the human machine. This body is capable of going on for a hundred years. It has various organs, each having a definite role to play. Who authored this creation?

SUBJECTIVE AND OBJECTIVE CREATION—THE AUTHORS

It is an intelligent creation; all are placed intelligently in the world also. The role of all scientists is only to find what is all there in creation so that we can make use of them. Thus a question can naturally arise—I am Awareness which is one, unlimited; all exist in me, including sun, moon, stars. But they are not floating about in creation, but placed intelligently. I am not talking of my private subjective creation, but the objects I see and perceive. Who is the author of this creation?

The first six chapters of the *Gītā* deal with what YOU ARE. The second six chapters deal with this problem of WHO is the author of this objective creation. Objective creation is one

of which I am not the author; the object is already there and I see it. It is not subjective. In dream I see a mountain. The mountain is not an objective creation—it is born of my mind, projecting mind. I see, therefore it is; I am the author of this creation. It is subjective.

CAUSE FOR THE OBJECTIVE CREATION

I see an object in the world; it is there for me to perceive. How can I account for it? Who authored this world? That creation is an·intelligent creation. The creator must be an intelligent being because he has created me who is intelligent. My reasoning does not accept any creation without any intelligent being. For any creation, there must be some *nimitta*—cause; one who has in one's mind the purpose of the very creation and knows what exactly one is going to create. That person is called *nimitta kāraṇam*—the efficient cause. He has the knowledge and skill to create that thing. Efficiency accounts for the knowledge of what to create and how to create. For example, a pot-maker knows what is a pot and how to make it. He knows what should be the material, how to make it, what should be the tools, the processes for making . . . . The pot-maker is the one who has knowledge and skill of making pots. If he has the knowledge, he can have the skill or hire the skill. The work involves skill and knowledge. A bird has the skill and knowledge to make the nest. The bee knows how to make a honeycomb.

One who creates, knows the thing one creates: *Ghatasya kartā ghatajñaḥ*—a pot-maker knows the pot. If I see the complete world, there must be an intelligent being who is the cause. This cause-hunting is natural to the human.

If I say, there is fire, there must be a cause for it. The intellect wants to find how. You say, "I see the smoke, therefore there is fire." For any inference or presumption there must be a *hetu*—cause. Otherwise, I will be led only by my nose, by my sense organs: there will be no inference, no presumption, no knowledge, and I will be as good as an animal.

Cause-hunting is the nature of the intellect. It knows that it cannot alter any law, but must abide by it, be it a live wire or gravitation.

This cause-hunting tells me I have been here because of my parents. There is no need to question and verify the existence of my great-grandfather because of the fact that I am here. I am here means I am the effect; I must have the cause. Anything which is an effect has to have a cause; so it must be with the creation also. Thus there must be a conscious, thinking being who created this world. Though I don't find any maker of anything I buy, I know well that there is a maker who has made it.

BELIEF AND KNOWLEDGE

If I ask you, " Do you believe in the creator, maker of this watch? Did it involve any creator or not?", the reply is only " Yes ". You did not see him; but still you say there is a creator for the watch. Can you say that it is a belief that you have? Can I say you believe in the creator of the watch?

Let us analyze what a belief is. A belief is a judgement before knowledge. If I judge before I come to know about a thing, it is called belief. Every belief is therefore subject to verification by enquiry. Suppose you say he is a good man; you really don't know, but only believe so because somebody told you that he is good. There is every possibility that this belief can be belied. If he turns out to be really good, then what you have is not belief but knowledge.

Belief, because it is not based on knowledge, can always be shaken. A belief is built on sand. Faith or belief that cannot be shaken is not faith. Let a million people say fire is cold, you will not accept it. Because, it is knowledge and so cannot be shaken by anyone. Beleif is always something that can go wrong. Now to the watch. If I say that I believe in the creator of the watch, it is subject to go wrong. Is there any possibility of a creator of the watch being not there? No. My intellect cannot accept it. I cannot imagine a creator-free

watch. Therefore, what I have is knowledge and not belief. Similarly, don't tell me you believe in God, you believe in the creator of the world. I see the creation which is intelligent and purposeful. Therefore, I don't believe that there is a creator, but I KNOW that there is some creator for this world. And that creator cannot be of limited knowledge. Why? *Ghatasya kartā ghatajñaḥ; viśvasya kartā viśvajñah; sarvasya kartā sarvajñaḥ*—the maker of the pot knows the pot; the creator of the world knows the world; the all, the creator of all, is an all-knower. He created all the worlds. He is all knowledge and all skill; that is why we call Him omniscient and all-powerful. He cannot be limited like me. I don't find such a one here anywhere, so I must put Him in a place to which I have no access. Therefore, I say, God seated in heaven created this world. But I find that this simplistic statement does not satisfy my intellect. The problem is, who created this heaven, for Him to be seated and to create this world? And before creation of that heaven, where was He seated? This problem arises because we fail to recognize another equally important cause for creation.

THE CREATOR—THE MATERIAL CAUSE

For anything that is made, there is one who has the intelligence to make it. But then, for making the pot, in addition to the intelligent cause, the pot-maker, the material of which pot is made, clay, also is necessary. Without this he cannot create the pot. Though I don't buy the pot-maker but only the pot, when I bring the pot, the material of the pot, clay, also comes along with the pot. When I bring the gold chain, I bring the gold also along with me. Wherever the effect goes, its material also goes along with it. The object is sustained by the material of which it is made. That cause with which the thing is made is called *upādāna kāraṇam*—the material cause. Material is necessary for the creation, material cause being as important as the creator. If you take that material into account for this creation, the Lord who created the world has to find material

to create the world. If the material is apart from Him, then the question is who made the material? To avoid landing in the logical absurdity of infinite regress, we must say that the material cause for the creation is also God. He must be God. He is the one who finds the material in Himself and He is also the author of the whole world. In *Mundakopaniṣad* it is said

Yathorṇanābhiḥ sṛjate gṛhṇate ca (I-1-7)

Just as a spider makes its web out of a material found in its own mouth, the creation is born out of Him. The spider does not go outside its body for the material; its own saliva is the material. So he is the *upādāna kāraṇam*—material cause for the web. The intelligent entity, Mr. Spider, is also the *sṛṣṭi-kartā*, the creator, who is the *nimitta kāraṇam*, the efficient cause, for the web.

Also, we all do this in sleep. When I dream, I am the author of the dream creation, and I am also the material of this dream creation. I am the author of the ocean, the mountain, sun, moon, everything I see in my dream. In dream, I create all these out of myself. Without motion I have created the world and made it out of material in myself. It is all a very vivid creation in my dream. For dream creation, from the standpoint of the material I find in dream, I am the *upādāna kāraṇam*, material cause, and from the standpoint of the intelligence necessary for the creation of the dream, I myself am the *nimitta kāraṇam*, the efficient cause. This physical world, the objective creation, is authored by someone like me who must indeed be both the efficient and material cause. If He is the material cause, He cannot stand apart from creation! In dream, the dream mountain is not apart from me; the dream body, like the cotton, is not different from the fabric. Anything that is born of a thing is not separate from the effect. If the Lord is the material and efficient cause of creation, what is the distance between the Lord and His creation? There can be no distance. He is the creation.

The Lord says

Mattaḥ parataram nānyat kincidasti dhananjaya
Mayi sarvamidam protam sūtre maṇi gaṇā iva. (VII-7)
Prabhavaḥ pralayaḥ sthānam nidhānam bījamavyayam. (IX-18)
Mayā tatamidam sarvam jagadavyakta mūrtinā
Matsthāni sarvabhūtāni na cāham teṣu avasthitaḥ. (IX-4)

I am the author of this creation. I being the material cause of creation, naturally the space, time, star, sun, moon, earth, trees, seeds, man, woman, they are all in Me. All these came from Me and are resolved in Me. I am not separate from the creation and there is nothing beyond Me. Don't take Me as one who is seated in heaven watching you.

The same is expressed in *Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad*

Īśāvāsyamidam sarvam yatkinca jagatyām jagat. (I-1)

The whole creation is pervaded by the Lord.

Now tell me where is *Bhagavān*, the Lord? Your body is *Bhagavān*, your hand is *Bhagavān*, because He is the material cause for that hand. You did not make the minerals of which the body is made. They were all there. You only appropriated these. The Lord says, " I am the material of which you are made; the fire, air, water, everything in you is Myself. Therefore, remember there is nothing that is apart from Me, God.

Therefore, how can I ever search for the Lord, unless I have concluded that He is not here? No one searches for a head because he has not yet concluded that he has no head! In this conclusion that I am to seek God and see God, there is an error: to conclude before you know is false. When I know, I know; I don't conclude. Before knowledge if I conclude, it is only born of a non-thinking, infantile mind. Before knowledge, I cannot conclude; after knowledge, it no more is conclusion! Therefore, *Bhagavān* says there is nothing beyond Me. All are Me. *Bhagavān* says this in five chapters (7 through 11).

LORD IS ALL FORMS

If the Lord talks to you in one form, you cannot say he is only that form. If he is limited by form, he does not deserve any worship; He is just like me. Because all forms are his form, I can invoke him in any form. If you see him in the form of Kṛṣṇa, that Kṛṣṇa would say, *Mattaḥ parataram nānyat*—there is nothing beyond me. He can also say, *Aham sarvasya prabhavaḥ pralayaḥ*—I am the author of the creation, to Me everything goes back.

If I ask Him what is that *Aham*, "I" that is omniscient and all-pervasive, He has to say "I" am that Awareness because of which I am aware of my all-knowledge, all-power, all-pervasive creation. What will YOU say if you are asked, "Who are you?" You will say, "I am a limited *jīva*." Who is that "I" in you? You have to say, "I am Awareness because of which I know MY limited knowledge, my limited powers, limited sense organs." There is no Lord's awareness and my awareness. Same Awareness "I" is. We are the same Awareness—and everything exists and moves in the same Awareness. However small may be my vision of the world, all are going to be in one Awareness. I can therefore say, "God, you are Awareness because of which you are aware of all knowledge, and I am Awareness because of which I am aware of my limited knowledge." With reference to a small mind, I say I have small knowledge, but the mind does not limit me. I am Awareness. In fact, the Lord and you are the same Awareness which "I" am. So I can tell you, in me you exist, if my reference is not placed in my body or sense organs but in the limitless Awareness. Any one of you can say the same if you know what you are talking about.

WAVE GAINING KNOWLEDGE

A wave is on the ocean. A breaker wave comes to dash, and this little wave wails, "I am a mortal. Protect me." The teacher wave tells it, "You are essentially water. What created you is the ocean. Ocean is God." If the wave asks,

" Where is the ocean," the reply would be, " There is no place where the ocean is not; wherever we are, in all waves the ocean is. All are pervaded by the ocean. The ocean is the material cause. In fact, that ocean thou art!" When told, " You are the ocean," that wave cannot understand. When the ocean says, " I am ocean," what does it mean? It only means water. When the wave says, " I am a wave," what is the " I"? That " I" also is only water. It is water which is indeed the ocean which is indeed the wave. That wave which has come to appreciate " I am water," knows the Truth. " I am water which is indeed the ocean," the wave knows. This is knowledge of the ocean, God, for the wave, the mortal. Hence, once it recognizes that " I am water," it can recognize that ocean is not apart from it. Similarly, the Lord has His being in Awareness in which also I am. In me is the creation, in me is the Lord!

12

God, Seeker, and the Wise Man

GOD, THE MATERIAL AND EFFICIENT CAUSE

The objective creation, a creation which is, and therefore I see, this creation enjoys two causes—called the efficient and the material. The *nimitta kāraṇam*—efficient cause, is the intelligent being necessary for a given creation. The material of which a thing is created is called *upādāna kāraṇam*—material cause. These two are the causes for the entire creation. The Lord says, " I am indeed the one from whom the creation is born, and what is born of Me is again sustained by me and it resolves only in me—*Aham kṛtsnasya jagataḥ prabhavaḥ pralayaḥ*." If it has to resolve into me, I am not merely the efficient cause, but the material cause as well. The pot-maker is distinct from the clay, and the pot does not resolve in the pot-maker, but only in the clay, its material cause. When the Lord says, " I am the cause for everything, I am the one in which everything is resolved," it means He is not merely the efficient cause but the material cause also, for the creation. He adds, " *Mattaḥ parataram nāsti*—there is nothing which is beyond Me or besides Me, in creation. No object can stand apart from Myself, I being the very cause for time, space, and also everything in time and space.

As we have seen, the spider, from the standpoint of material for the web, is the material cause; and from the standpoint of the intelligence that is necessary, the same being is called the efficient cause. So too, in your dream, you are the material and efficient cause for your dream creation. The Lord's objective creation is also by Himself as material and efficient cause.

HOW CAN I SEEK HIM—JÑĀNAM AND VIJÑĀNAM

You did not create this world, but came into it. It is the creation of the Lord. Man really creates nothing. He only rearranges, makes compounds of what He has created. Once He is the material cause, He is not up there in heaven. It is not that He is in heaven, but he is beyond your comprehension. We don't appreciate what He is and so we pray

Tavatatvam na jānāmi kīdṛśosi maheśvara
Yādṛśosi Mahādeva tādṛśāya namo namaḥ.

" I don't know where you are, who you are, much less in which form. Whatever and wherever you are, let this salutation go to you."

This is a very practical prayer indeed!

Once you really appreciate the material cause for creation, you need not go anywhere to find him. He is the space, air, fire, water, earth, and all that is tangible on the earth. Therefore, anything that is made of earth, anything which is in the time-space co-ordinates, is Him alone. This physical body is not mine because it is something made up of *pṛthvī*, the earth. Not only the body is Him but the sense organs, the mind which can think, doubt, decide, know, remember and forget—in fact, anything that is created is all Him. Therefore *Bhagavān* says

Aham kṛtsnasya jagataḥ prabhavaḥ pralayastathā. (VII-6)

" I am the cause for the entire world, the world exists and goes back to me."

He is not there up in heaven because he is the material cause as well, and so you cannot say, " I do not know the Lord. " But he cannot be an object of your knowledge, for, an object has to be different from you. This is not possible because he cannot be away from you, minus you. If everyone is different from the Lord, what will be left of the Lord is precious little. This vision of looking upon the Lord as an object makes you better

than God. Because He becomes an object, you are separate from Him, you can see Him. You can dismiss the object God and continue to exist! The atom is great, but one who can bombard it and get energy is greater. Similarly, if the Lord is an object, I am conscious of the Lord; I am, therefore, greater than the Lord! I am aware of something else, then the Lord becomes *āgamāpāyī*—He comes and goes. If I objectify Him, He is there; if not, He disappears! Such a situation arises out of a wrong understanding of what God is.

WHO IS A DEVOTEE?

I can invoke Him in one form, but to say that he is apart from me is not wise. That is why two separate words, *jñānam* and *vijñānam*, are mentioned in the seventh chapter. The knowledge you have of the Lord as different from you and not identical with you is not complete; it is *jñānam*; you are only an *āstika*, believer.

Of the ocean, waves are born; by the ocean they are sustained, and into the ocean they go back. The wave is born of the ocean, so it can be considered as a *jīva*, and the ocean then is the *Īśvara*, God. The wave is related to the ocean as the individual and the total. The ocean inheres every wave. The wave looks upon the ocean as distinct from itself: for the wave thinks, " I was born. I am limited." This appreciation of existence of the ocean God, itself is a big leap in thinking. Instead, if the wave thinks it comes from heaven, or there is nothing beyond itself (the wave), it is an idiot wave. Once it appreciates the efficient cause for his birth, namely, the ocean, that wave becomes an *āstika*, a devotee wave. He knows the ocean *asti*, is, like you know there was a great-great-grandfather for you.

THREE TYPES OF DEVOTEES

Devotees are three-fold: *ārtaḥ*, *arthārthī*, *jijñāsuḥ*—one who is desperate, one who desires some object, and one who desires to know God. All have got *jñānam*, knowledge that

the Lord is. *Ārtaḥ* is one who is desperate; when things and events go in sixes and sevens, he throws up his arms to him and implores the Lord to help him get out of the tight situation he has landed in! He feels that only He can extricate him. He accepts the Lord's power and seeks His help. *Bhagavān* says he is also *udārah*, a devotee.

Another is *arthārthī*—one who desires objects. Whenever he prays, there is a condition. He has desires for various ends. He knows that he has to put in effort to gain them, but also appreciates the necessity of the third factor, *daivam*, God. It is not that he depends only on God. He does put forth effort, but he implores the third factor, *daivam*. His prayer becomes a *karma*, an action. Any action has to produce results. God is the wielder of laws. This *karma* of prayer has to yield results. As He is the wielder of laws, this third factor becomes favourable. That is why prayer is efficacious. Otherwise, for this utilitarian man paryer cannot have any value now. What is offered as prayer is immaterial. It can be flowers or a leaf or water. Kṛṣṇa says

Patram puṣpam phalam toyam
yome bhaktyā prayacchati
Tadaham bhaktyupahṛtam
aśnāmi prayatātmanaḥ. (IX-26)

" I take anything that is offered with devotion—be it a leaf, flower, fruit or water!"

The Lord accepts whatever is offered. The devotee appreciates Him as the *karma phala dātā*—the giver of the fruit of action. The result of this action, prayer, will have to come from Him. The prayer can be *kāyikam*—in the form of physical action, or *vācikam*—in the form of praising his glories, or *mānasam*—purely mental. All are efficacious.

The third type of devotee, the *jijñāsu*, also does not know God very well. But he is not interested in any limited end. He only wants to know himself, the Lord, and the world. He is called *jijñāsu*—the one who desires to know. To know

all the three constitute exactly the subject matter of his enquiry. One who is desirous of these is also a devotee. He is the best among the three. He does not seek anything else but knowing the truth of the Lord. This is what Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna

Caturvidhā bhajante mām janāḥ sukṛtinaḥ arjuna
Ārto jijñāsuḥ arthārthī jñānī ca bharatarṣabha. (VII-16)

Udārāḥ sarva evaite . . . (VII-18)

" Four kinds of people worship me, Arjuna—the suffering, the one who desires to know me, one who has ends to achieve, and the wise man. All these are my devotees."

All enjoy some *jñānam*—knowledge of the Lord. All these know that the Lord is. One wants to know. The other wants Him to give him something. The third wants Him to help him. The *jijñāsu* goes after the Lord. The others go after the Lord for gaining something else in life, and not the Lord. There is nothing wrong in it as they too appreciate His presence and powers. The *jijñāsu*, one who desires to know him, however, knows that chasing ends in life are only solving small problems. He knows that others are doing this merely because they have not understood the basic problem. So he is only interested in knowing Him, which is knowing himself. If you want to know the truth of anyone, be it the world, or God, or you, the other two come along, as the three are not isolated factors.

JÑĀNĪ—THE WISE MAN

The Lord says that all these devotees don't have proper knowledge of Him. The one who knows Him totally is the *jñānī*, the wise man. He is the greatest devotee. When I say, " Lord is," it is *jñānam*; but when I say, " Lord I am," it is *vijñānam*. Hence the whole chapter is called *Jñāna Vijñāna Yoga*. If you know that the Lord is, that He is the cause for everything, it is only knowledge. But seeing the fact that the Lord is I, the Awareness, is *vijñānam*. He is Aware-

ness because of which He is aware of His limitless knowledge and power, and I am also aware of my limited knowledge because of the same Awareness. The truth Awareness is the same; so in me is the Lord. This is true knowledge, *vijñānam*.

The wave knows that it is water, and for the wave to say he is the ocean is real knowledge, *vijñānam*. The wave may die, but it is a *jñānī*—wise wave. That oneness which is the common factor for this wave and all waves born before, and for the ocean, is only water; this knowledge makes it a *jñānī* wave. *Bhagavān* says

Jñānī tu ātmaiva me matam. (VII-18)

" *Jñānī* is the one whose devotion has paid off. He has become one with Myself, by knowing. Such a *jñānī* is indeeed Myself. "

WHAT IS *BRAHMA*?

Arjuna has heard Kṛṣṇa using words like *Brahma*, *adhyātma*, and *karma* during the teaching. He wants to know the meaning of these words. Explaining these words, Lord Kṛṣṇa continues the topic to its natural end. Arjuna's first question is *Kim tat Brahma*—what is that Brahman? *Bhagavān* answers, *Akṣaram paramam Brahma*—*Brahma* means limitlessness. *Bṛh* means that which is big. In Sanskrit every word has its being in its root; it is the root that gives the meaning to the word. The word is an evolute from the root; it is derived by well-defined rules of grammar. If you know the language as it should be learned, you can see the word through and through because you know exactly from what root it has come. The roots from which the words are derived are also alive and in vogue. Thus they are not objects of mere etymological interest. For example, in the English language, a word like "world" is given to the world, which has no special intrinsic meaning. But in Sanskrit, the word for world is *jagat*, which is resolved as *jāyate gacchati iti*—that which is born and goes is *jagat*, the world. It tells the very nature of the world.

Brahma is a very important word. We all have heard about this word; we call it " absolute reality ", though we do not know what is absolute or what is reality. Arjuna thus asked the right question. *Brahma* is derived from the root *bṛh* meaning, big. *Brahma* is the noun form of the root. In grammar, we learn that adjectives qualify the noun, conditioning the noun. But on analysis you will find that nouns qualify the adjective, condition it. Supposing I say it is a big mountain, you appreciate that it has a certain size. You don't say that the pebble I have in my hand is mountain-big. Now, if I use the same adjective for a building and say it is a big building, the big here means only building-big, not mountain-big. If I say a big microbe, I still need a microscope to see it. The adjective, big, remaining the same, as the noun changes, the meaning of the adjective changes. Thus the noun qualifies the adjective! But if I form a noun from *bṛh*, the root, it becomes *Brahma*. By this, all the conditioning nouns are eliminated. There is nothing to qualify or determine or limit the bigness; therefore, BIG it is; it has no form, no limitation whatsoever. That which is not limited by space, because of which even space is, that is called *Paramam Brahma* which is indeed *Adhyātma*, *Sat Cit Ānanda*. That which is not subject to time or space, that *Ātmā* " I " is indeed *Paramam Brahma*. The ocean is just water, the wave is but water; this water is the basis for wave and ocean. *Ātmā* " I ", is resolved as *Āpnoti sarvam, vyāpnoti sarvam iti Ātmā*—that which covers, pervades everything. *Brahma* is limitless because it pervades everything, and everything is in it. Thus understand that *Ātmā* " I " is *Brahma*. *Bhagavān* says in the eighth chapter, one who is able to appreciate this fact that *Īśvara*, God, and *jīva*, individual, are only two apparent entities, and behind both is the common factor which is that *akṣara*, changeless, deathless *Paramam Brahma* that is myself, " thus he who knows himself to be not different from Me, he is one with Me ." He is a liberated soul, a wise man. He has no birth or death. He is the one who appreciates himself as *Paramam Brahma*, limitlessness, which alone is *jīva*, individual, and *Īśvara*, God

Only one appears in manifold forms like energy. All forms of matter are only energy. All forms of energy are but one. Similarly, what is, is one Awareness alone. It is all oneness. There is no difference between the Lord and man. Only *veṣas*, costumes, differ. On the stage of a play one comes as a beggar, the other as a king. Both actors are paid the same amount. Behind the stage, they are equal. On the platform, one assumes a royal air. The beggar and his language also are different, a language that evokes pity. Once in the green room, there is no beggar or king; both are actors. Similarly, the Lord is one who is the whole creation. I am only a limited being. Because of these two *veṣas*, costumes, roles, both appear different. Because of his role of the Lord, *Īśvara*, His body includes your physical body and He is power absolute, knowledge absolute, and all-pervasive. I look at myself through this single physical body; naturally I am limited. I am small. I feel bound. Knowledge consists in giving up just this notion, not giving up this body. By giving up the notion, look at yourself from the " I " standpoint, because of which all are seen; apart from " I " *Ātmā*, nothing is.

Abhyāsa yoga yuktena cetasā nānyagāminā
Paramam puruṣam divyam yāti pārthānucintayan.

(VIII-8)

" The one who is able to appreciate this, giving up this notion of limitation, with a mind that repeatedly dwells only upon this fact of Myself, he reaches Me, the effulgent! "

I don't take this physical body as " I " and say, " I am the Lord. " This can be only due to a total lack of understanding. People criticize *Vedānta* because there is an incapacity to understand the meaning of the vision. It is a knowledge of a different order. It is the knowledge of what IS, not what APPEARS! The top or middle or bottom of the wave is only water. Similarly, what IS, what I AM, is but Awareness that is not limited. The one whose mind is awake to this fact is identical with the Lord in this sense. In the physical body,

which is limited, he knows that he is only apparently limited.

You look at yourself in a concave or convex mirror. You don't get alarmed at your distortion. You know it is but apparent. Similarly, to play the role of a beggar on stage is one thing and to be lost as the beggar offstage also is another thing. Arjuna, *abhyāsa yogena*, by contemplation upon what I am, *ananya cetasā*, with a mind which is not going in a million directions, the mind that goes to Me, the one who is able to appreciate Me as oneself, not different from Me, for him *Punarjanma na vidyate*—there is no rebirth.

DEATH AND BIRTH

We cannot find an end for anything. I am not this body-mind-sense organs complex which is inert. I am someone who is wielding this body-mind complex, and I am conscious. That conscious being cannot come to an end just because the body comes to an end. The physical body is matter; even matter is not destroyed. Energy conserves itself also in one form or other. Matter does not come to an end. Energy does not come to an end. How can you logically show that the conscious being alone comes to an end? Assuming the conscious being *jīva* continues its journey, a death has taken place means only that the association of the *jīva* with a given physical body has ended. The scripture says the *jīva* is a traveller; he assumes another body due to *karma*. If he assumes a human body, he will do good and bad actions which will give him both seen and unseen results. Those which you don't see are called *puṇya*, virtue, and *pāpa*, sin. According to this *puṇya-pāpa* account, he gains another body. In that body he does *karma*, more results of *puṇya-pāpa*, another body, more actions, more results . . . like this he keeps on going; this is how *samsāra cakra*—the wheel of *samsāra*, goes. If he thinks he is a *samsārī*, it is because of a single error—" I am an actor; result of action belongs to me." If I am an actor, result will come to me. But if I know I am Actionlessness,

how can the result ever come to me? Hence all that was standing in the name of the old fellow, the actor, is written off. So, when his body dies away, there is no question of being born again for that wise man who knows that he is Actionlessness.

Others die in the hope that they will put an end to problems by dying. They are not released, but only enter this sorrow of birth. They are born into *dukhālayam aśāśvatam*—this ephemeral world of sorrow. (VIII-15). Crying he is born, continues to cry, moves from sorrow to sorrow, and one day dies away. Life for him is not a merry-go-round. This is *samsāra*; he remains there and does not come out of it. Kṛṣṇa adds: " That one who appreciates Me comes out of it."

Ananya cetāḥ satatam yo mām smarati nityaśaḥ
Tasyāham sulabhaḥ pārtha nitya yuktasya yoginaḥ
(VIII-14)

" He who remembers Me, for him I am easy to get. For him, there cannot be anything easier than himself to achieve because he is already there! "

You think you lost your purse and search. Once you recognize that it is in your own pocket, what is the difficulty in finding it? This knowledge of yourself as the limitless being is not a thing to be accomplished by you. There is no effort, no motion or action in knowing, recognizing yourself. You need not contract your muscles, there is no need to do any *Nauli* or *Bandha**, and no techniques are involved. You have to recognize the limitless as yourself. The Lord says, " He who appreciates Me for good, who does not lose himself, for him I am *sulabhah*, I am the easiest.

The other one who wants this and that, who is only interested in achieving little ends, he will not reach Me. Through paths he cannot reach Me. You can reach ends by paths, but you cannot cut a path to reach yourself. There are varicus means

* Some of the *Hatha Yoga* practices.

or techniques to make your mind purer, more abiding, and subtler, but to recognize yourself is the final end. For this there is no path, no track is involved. Darkness cannot meet light: light comes and darkness goes. The sun cannot meet darkness wherever he goes. Similarly, ignorance and knowledge are opposed to each other. Thus there is no track for knowledge, for ignorance to reach. The Lord says, " I am the most easy, I am the most difficult. If you look out for me, you cannot find me. So I am the most difficult. For the one whose mind is ready, who has the blessing of teaching, I am easy to know!

13

King among Secrets

BRAHMA IS *ĀTMĀ*, THE SELF

The eighth chapter of the *Gītā* begins with the definition of *Brahman*. The word *Brahman* is born of the root *bṛh*, which means big. *Brahma*, the noun, means the BIG, that is, it has no limitations caused by space, object, and time. It means the subject, Awareness " I ", and all things I know are objects of my knowledge. I am a knower with reference to the objects known, but with reference to myself, I am knowledge; not knowledge of " this ", but pure knowledge, i.e., " I " Awareness: the content of knowledge is indeed Awareness. This " I " assumes a relative role called the awarer, the one who is aware of this world. Knower minus the objects known is the essence of the knower, which is nothing but Awareness. It has no form. Therefore, there is no limitation of time or space or quality; that is called *Brahman*.

Ātmā is that which pervades everything. Thus I, the *Ātmā*, is *Brahman*—*Ayamātmā Brahma*: this is the message of all *Upaniṣads*. This " I " you take as a limited being, a mortal; that mortal you are not. But *Ayamātmā Brahma*—this *Ātmā* is " I ", is *Param Brahma*—the limitlessness. I limit myself to the physical body, sense organs, mind, etc., though I know them as " this ". All these limitations of " this " are thrown upon " I ", and I suffer limitations. Due to this non-recognition of my real self, I take myself to be limited. I cannot stand limitation and go about removing this limitation; and this groping is called *samsāra*. The problem being illegitimate, by wiping out thoughts by *samādhi* or by raising *kuṇḍalini* or doing any *karma* you cannot solve this problem. The cause for this limitation is ignorance; you may remove one

desire, still many more will crop up like the heads of Rāvaṇa.* Unless you shoot at the heart of the problem, the ignorance, the problem will not go away. If the darkness of ignorance has to go, it can be only by the light of knowledge.

BRANCHES OF KNOWLEDGE

In the ninth chapter of the *Gītā*, this knowledge is called *Rāja Vidyā*—king among branches of knowledge. It is the *mahārājā*, emperor, among *vidyā*—knowledge. Disciplines of knowledge are many: alchemy, astrology, astronomy, biology, botany, chemistry, logic, linguistics. . . . We can have thousands of disciplines of knowledge, but no one can have the last word in any discipline. I cannot know everything; therefore, I need many who specialize in different disciplines. There must be one to know what it is to make an automobile. Another must be there to know what goes in the creation of a rocket or plane. One should be able to pry into my body, or mind, but one cannot be all. Thus a lawyer with a medical problem goes to a doctor, and the doctor goes to a lawyer if he is in a legal jam. Thus *parasparam bhāvayantaḥ*, helping each other, we live. One can choose a given branch of knowledge. In this choice you don't lose anything because anyway you have got to consult somebody else. That is how a relative being has to conduct his affairs in this world.

UNIQUENESS OF SELF-KNOWLEDGE

In all these branches of knowledge, if there is one knowledge in which there is no choice, which everyone has to know, knowing which you are so tall that your height cannot be measured, it is knowledge about YOU, the one who goes about gaining every other knowledge. It is a waste of life, a great loss, if one does not find WHO is the one who goes about

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* Raavana is the ten-headed demon in the *Raamaayana*, who, due to a boon, had the ability to grow heads even as they were cut off! His life was in his heart, and he was slain by Raama by an arrow that hit his heart.

knowing things! If the *pramātā*, knower, is not aware of himself, what he is about in life is not known to him, his life is not meaningful. If I don't know myself, of what use are accomplished goals? I have only a childish mind. I may conduct my affairs, but I will always be a confused person, confusing everyone else. If I am confused, I cannot bring about any fusion in society. Hence *Bhagavān* says the knowledge of yourself you have got to know. The knowledge also makes you so different that it is not within the scope of a choice. It is a knowledge of the ONE thing, knowing which everything is as well known. *Kaivalya Upaniṣad* says

Yasmin vijñāte sarvam idam vijañātam bhavati.

" Knowing which everything is as well known. "

If you know pot, you will not know cloth, because when you know one thing, you don't know the other. Here the Lord says, knowing which everything is as well known. How? He says, " If you know Me, you know the whole world. "

KNOW THE LORD

" I am the one who is behind all forms, who is the cause for all forms of creation. *Mayātatamidam sarvam*—by me the whole creation is pervaded; I am the basis of the creation. The *upādāna kāraṇam*, material cause of any creation, sustains the creation and obtains in the creation. The Lord is the material cause for the whole universe, but He says, "But creation is not me." How is this possible? Water, the material cause of waves, obtains in the waves and sustains the waves, but it is not the wave. But the wave is water. If water is the wave, it would be a wave wherever there is water. The wave has no independent existence, it depends entirely upon water; but water can be totally independent, can remain without the wave. So too, the Lord IS NOT the creation, but creation IS pervaded by the Lord.

If this is understood, one can appreciate this too: That ONE thing because of which the creation is, by which it is sustained and unto which it is resolved. *Bhagavān* says, "That cause I am, *Param Brahma Sat Cit Ānanda*—limitless existence awareness. There is no question of anything apart from Myself." As we have seen, any creation involves a creator, and that creator knows all about that creation. The creator of the world, because He created all, is *sarvajñaḥ*, *sarvaśaktimān* —all knowledge, almighty. He cannot be away from this creation.

KNOW THYSELF

In the world there are two types of creation: subjective and objective. In both there is a particular fact. Let us take a creation called a silver chain. This chain was not before it was made. Before the chain was made, it was the material, silver. After the chain is made, it is still silver. When the chain is broken or melted, the chain is gone, but then what is left out is still silver. If before the chain was made it was silver, after the chain is broken also there is silver, and in between too silver, where is the chain? Suppose one does not know what a chain is and wants to see it, he will see only silver. You can show him the chain, but he will say it is only silver. Every link is only silver, and in between links there is space. What is the chain? He sees only silver. We have to tell him that what is there is only silver, the chain is not there, but by common consent let us call it a chain. For the word "chain", there is no object save silver. Chain is therefore a name for a form. It is the same with silver too! Thus any creation is only *nāma*—name, given to a *rūpa*—form. The creation itself is a great magic. Any object which is sustained by a given material cannot stand apart from the material. The truth of the creation is only the material. What is available for public knowledge and handling, without the frills of our own projection, what presents to everybody's eyes, is the world of the Lord, called *Īśvara sṛṣṭi*—creation of the Lord. The Lord

is the efficient cause, so the world is of the Lord. He is the material cause, and so He is not away from the world. We see, and the Lord sees this world. Out of this creation of the Lord, I add my subjective, private versions and see a different world decked with the frills of my own projection. This is my subjective creation called *jīva sṛṣṭi*—creation of the individual.

He says, "I am the Lord", and you say, "I am the individual"; both enjoy one thing in common: I . . . I . . . I . . . . This " I " is *Brahman*. I, *Brahman*, is limitless. It is not limited by time and space. It is one limitless Awareness. The "I" of the Lord is the same one Awareness in which the various minds, thoughts and things exist. The Lord and I are one Awareness, *Brahman*; from that Awareness alone both the subjective and objective creations have come. What is projected by my mind, or what is projected by the Lord, both are from one Awareness alone.

REAL AND APPARENT—THE GREAT SECRET

If that Awareness is *Brahman*, does that *Brahman* really undergo any intrinsic change to become the world? Let us come back to the chain. The chain is made of silver; in making the chain, or in becoming the chain, or in being the chain, did silver undergo any change? If silver had undergone a change to become the chain, it is no more silver but something else! Cotton does not undergo a change to become cloth. Water has undergone no change but the waves are born; and the ocean too is the same water as even the waves are. What is, is only water, though each wave recognizes the other as a different wave. So, without undergoing any INTRINSIC change, things become different! Therefore, the different things I see are apparent. If an object, without undergoing intrinsic change, becomes a different object, then the change is only apparent. The modification can enjoy a different name and form, but in reality it is the same. Thus the apparent chain enjoys a reality in silver, the wave in water, or the pot in clay. Clay is reality, the pot is apparent. The

pot IS when clay IS; the pot is gone, but clay IS. So clay is real, the pot is apparent. This is a great secret. It is called *rāja guhya*—king among secrets; it is not an ordinary thing.

You find the one is when the other is; the other is not, still the one is. This is an amazing fact. Please see. I am the limitless Awareness; limitless Awareness IS; the Lord IS, the world IS; His world IS, my own appreciation of His world IS. It does not matter whether my appreciation of it is funny or proper. Also the kick I get out of the world IS, or the world that gives me a kick also IS, my desire IS, a thing IS, all that exists IS. All these exist in I, Awareness. So Kṛṣṇa says, "*Matsthāni sarvabhūtāni*—all things exist in Me alone." Understand, all exist in YOU, in fact. This is the greatest secret because the Lord is you. In common with the Lord, I can say, " All things exist in Me alone.' He adds, Arjuna, *Paśya me yogamaiśvaram*—see my magic. Without any change on my part I have become this world!

In the next line he takes back this statement and says, " *Na ca matsthāni bhūtāni*—nothing is in Me!" What is this? Let us go back to our ocean, wave and water. Water says, " I am, the wave is, the ocean is, all exist in me. " Again it says, " There is nothing in me, save me. " Just because waves come, water did not get buried. You don't wait for all waves to go for seeing water. So the water can say, " *Na ca matsthāni*, the waves and the ocean are NOT in me." Waves don't cover water. Similarly, for one who appreciates oneself as limitless, all are in Awareness; therefore all beings exist in him. This vision is not from the standpoint of any form. Pure Awareness is my nature. From that standpoint, the world is, I AM; the world goes away, I AM. In sleep, the world goes away, I still get up and say I slept. But Awareness itself does not depend on any of these, and hence *Na ca matsthāni*—nothing is in Me, says the Lord.

THIS is a great secret. You cannot even say it is a secret because a secret can be pried upon and can be let out! This secret cannot be revealed by your own efforts. *Rāja guhyam* is not a royal secret, but a king among secrets. This secret

you cannot expose or discover because it is YOU, and YOU are going about searching for you! Knowing this secret, you become one in whom the entire creation is.

The individual who has been taking himself as limited in all possible ways, for him the truth of this teaching is a secret. If you feel you are a creature of circumstances, it is because of your concept of the world and yourself as limited and real! The world must necessarily be impinging upon you due to this notion, and you think the world is too much with you. In reality, you are the centre of creation; you are, and because of you the creation is.

YOU ARE FULL

When a pot is born, the pot-space does not elbow out the space. Space is in and through pot. Space is not restricted by things; it will accommodate everything, still be one limitless space. Similarly, "I" Awareness sustains everything. That one "I" is full like

Antaḥ pūrṇaḥ bahiḥ pūrṇaḥ, pūrṇa kumbha ivārṇave.

When a pot is filled and kept in the waters of the ocean, its inside is full, outside also is full.

What is inside is water, and outside it is water. It is full inside and outside. Similarly, I am one who is whole, who is fullness, in this " I " the world exists, thoughts exist. Thoughts come and go, objects of thought come and go in Awareness, but Awareness is not affected. If I take myself to be a thought, anything will affect me; my mind will react. But I am Awareness, fullness, *śāntaḥ*—silence. I am silence behind my eyes; let forms come, I am silence. I am silence behind my ears; let sounds come, I am Awareness, silence. Let objects of perception come to me, but " I " Awareness is not affected by them. I am not any of them, *Na ca matsthāni*—they are not in me. I am independent. They cannot affect me. I am silence, Awareness. Because of me they exist.

This knowledge turns the table for you. Instead of depending on things for your happiness, you know that you are in reality just the opposite—a full, complete being, in whom all existed, exist and will exist! What is warranted thus is only a change of scale of vision. What IS, is different from what you see. You appreciate this simple truth about yourself: the world IS, I AM, the world is NOT, I AM. Therefore " I " become real, the world depends upon me. This world, which depends upon me, is called *māyā*. That which has no independent existence is called *māyā*. When you say the chain is, silver alone is real and the chain is *māyā*. The world belongs to the group of *māyā*. *Satyam*, truth, in the chain is only silver.

Similarly, I am *satyam*, real, the world is *māyā* as it exists after me.

To sum up, the statements by Kṛṣṇa on the relation between the world and " I " are

Matsthāni sarva bhūtāni na cāham teṣvavasthitaḥ. (IX-4)
Na ca matsthāni bhūtāni paśya me yogamaiśvaram. (IX-5)

" All beings exist in Me, I am not in them. No, all beings don't exist in Me—see My magic."

This is the greatest magic, the magician is the Lord, and that Lord is YOU, you have to appreciate that. YOU are the cause of the whole creation. Without you, the Lord, undergoing any change, the whole creation has come, the whole creation resolves in you.

You ask a physicist, he knows that he can define only quality but not a substance because there is no substance. You are THE substance, and that is the ONLY substance and others are not. They all resolve in you. Therefore *Bhagavān* says

Rāja vidyā rāja guhyam pavitramidam uttamam
Pratyakṣāvagamam dharmyam susukham kartumavyayam.
(IX-2)

This knowledge (about you, the world and the Lord) is a king among various disciplines and a king among secrets. It is the most sacred among secrets. It is easy for one who can see. It is also most difficult because of the same reason—you have got to see, to understand. If your mind is not ready for this knowledge, it is very difficult.

MAN'S CARES

Anything that you want in your life falls under *Yoga* and *kṣema*. What are they? *Yoga* is defined as *Aprāptasya prāpaṇam Yogam*—the process of achieving what you don't have, but want to have, is *Yoga*. A man is unhappy; if you ask why, he would say he was working for achieving something but he is not able to get it. This is a problem of *Yoga*. *Prāptasya rakṣaṇam kṣemaḥ*—the protection of what you already have is *kṣemam*. The fellow who was happy the other day becomes sorrowful the next day because his son met with an accident. This is a problem of *kṣema*. There can be no third source of sorrow in life. Think. Either we want to have something or do not want to lose something we already have. There is no other possibility. This is the life of a *samsārī*. Thus all sorrows are brought under two words by *Bhagavān*, to *Yoga* and *kṣema*. He says, " Arjuna, if you cannot follow what I have been telling, do one thing

Ananyāścintayanto mām ye janāḥ paryupāsate
Teṣām nityābhiyuktānām yoga kṣemam vahāmyaham.
(IX-22)

" Hand over your life to me. Appreciate Me as one who is the cause of everything. Therefore, there is nothing that is beyond Me. Appreciate Me as one *karma phala dātā*—through My laws I give you results for your action. Therefore, your *Yoga* will be taken care of by Me. It is given to you to act; you perform action. I will give the result. Whether you recognize Me or not, I will give you what your actions deserve. You are not the giver of the fruit of action. Therefore

Karmaṇyeva adhikāraste mā phaleṣu kadācana. (II-47)

"You have choice only over action and not over the results. Your *Yoga and kṣema, Aham vahāmi*—I take care. Take results as they come. When you perform action, think of Me; when the work is over, think of Me."

This is still a part of our culture today. We don't begin anything without invoking the Lord, whether it is construction of a building or even a simple thing like driving a car. This is appreciation of the Lord as the wielder of all laws. We act, with great alertness, accept the result as it is coming from Him: have this attitude. "If you don't understand the cryptic statement, "*Matsthāni na ca matsthāni sarva bhūtāni*—all beings in Me, all beings are not in Me," your mind is wriggling with likes and dislikes; you have to be freed from their hold. For this you have an attitude—recognize the Lord as the giver of fruits. He takes care of your *Yoga* and *kṣema*. Even for those who don't recognize Him, He is the giver of the fruits of action. But they think that they are carrying the entire burden on their shoulders. You do not be like the one who carried a load on the head while travelling in a train so as not to add weight to the train! If you have the right attitude, you will have no reaction to results like sorrow, regrets, frustration, anger, hatred or jealousy. All these are only due to likes and dislikes; with this proper attitude, likes and dislikes can be neutralized. With this neutralization, what has been told, "*Matsthāni na ca matsthāni*—all are in Me, nothing is in Me," which you don't see now, you will know very clearly. As the mind becomes clearer, freed from reactions, you will discover yourself. This is not a transformation involving any becoming or change, but it is only giving up ignorance. By this you will see yourself as someone in whom the whole thing depends. This knowledge is called *rāja guhya*—king among secrets. It is a secret because it is yourself concealed by yourself in yourself and not outside!

14

God's Glories

TIMELESS AND TIME-BOUND

In the seventh chapter, revealing knowledge, *Bhagavān* said, *Mayā tatamidam sarvam*—this entire creation is pervaded by Me. Again, in the ninth chapter, called *Rājavidyā Rājaguhyam* —king among branches of knowledge, the king among secrets, He said, *Matsthāni sarva bhūtāni*—all things and beings constituting the creation are in Me. Again, in the very next line, He made the statement, *Na ca matsthāni sarva bhūtāni*— in fact nothing exists in Me, I am free from all of them! These statements reveal the relationship obtaining between the timeless and time-bound, infinite and finite, limitless and limited, absolute and relative.

Playing different roles in movies, if I am a king in one movie, a great *sannyāsī* in another, a minister in the third, all these beings are in me. All these are various relative roles of me, the actor. But I myself am neither the king, nor *sannyāsī*, nor the minister. I am the absolute one with reference to the relative roles, who fills up all roles, in whom each has its existence. From my own standpoint, I am independent of all the roles. It is this that *Bhagavān* means by *matsthāni* and *naca matsthāni*. From your own standpoint, from the standpoint of *Ātmā*, you are Awareness. It is this Awareness in which the creation exists, and it is that which is free from the entire creation. The difference is between the real and the apparent. The metal is real and the chain is apparent. The chain has no independent existence apart from the metal; the metal is real. I am real. I shine independently—everything is dependent on my existence. Therefore, Arjuna, you are not as you think you are; you are the opposite. You think you are limited, but

in you actually the whole creation exists. The entire *Gītā* unfolds this vision alone, and this is the vision of the *Upaniṣads* too. *Tat* is that one which you want to be, the limitless, free Self; *Tat tvam asi*—That you are. This is *rāja guhya*, king of secrets, it was told. In the end, *Bhagavān* said, if you are unable to appreciate this, your mind has to be purified. Have an attitude in life and perform action; then *Yoga kṣemam vahāmyaham*—I will take care of you. Perform action. The result is due to my laws. For the discerning mind it is visible. If you appreciate this, you will have a mind to receive things as they come and leave things as they go. Therefore, the likes and dislikes which make the mind, the bouncing wall of reaction for all perceptions, will be freed. Likes and dislikes will be neutralized. This is the only means. Though He has revealed what is to be revealed, still the problem of not seeing continues to remain. Hence *Bhagavān* wants Arjuna to make sure that likes and dislikes are eliminated. These two are great enemies for you. He said before, *Jñeyassa nitya sannyāsī yo na hṛṣyati na dveṣṭi* (V-3)—the wise man is one who does not subject himself to likes and dislikes. As things come he accepts and, when they go, he does not get orphaned. He does not subject himself to climax and anti-climax as things come and go. Since poise and wisdom go together, the man who has knowledge achieves poise.

PEACEFUL MIND

In the beginning you must have a relative poise so that you can own up absolute poise. If I want to be all peace, I must be relatively peaceful. A relatively silent mind will discover silence that is my nature; a relatively peaceful mind will discover peace, my nature; a relatively sympathetic mind will discover sympathy, my nature. You have a certain attitude in the beginning, enjoying peace as a value, peace to be achieved in a relative manner. This mind discovers the absolute, abiding peace. This is possible only if the mind is peaceful. "I am peace"; "my mind is peaceful"—see the difference. In the

second sentence, peace is an adjective. First you go in for an adjective—peaceful mind. Then it becomes a noun. The adjective becoming a noun is made possible if the mind is peaceful! The relative ·peace is a must for discovering the peace that is absolute. No one can say that he can discover peace through a track of agitation. Like a mosquito searching for a shady part of a body, the mind which searches for the shady part of people, to find something which is not correct in them, only suffers. *Bhagavān* says such a mind will not discover peace. Have a right attitude and develop a peaceful mind. To the extent the mind is peaceful, it is open.

SENSITIVE MIND

Often we hear of *antaḥkaraṇa śuddhi*, purification of the mind. You cannot clean it with a detergent, but only remove the reactions that happen. There is a cause for this reaction to happen. It is due to likes and dislikes which nobody can avoid in his life. A child has to grow only with likes and dislikes, brought up with fine likes and dislikes. You cannot bring up the child with the eternal wisdom that there will be no likes and dislikes, because, it has not got the intellectual facility to do this. The education, culture and civilization account for the fineness of your likes and dislikes. The finer your likes and dislikes, the more mature you are. Physically we are already mature; nature stands still and wants to see what we can do with such a body. The faculty of choice and reason are given; nature is not going to push us anymore. We have to use our choice, to begin with at least, because we are not to be programmed by nature. The free will is given to us; the whole thing lies with us. We grow picking up likes and dislikes. In some people the likes and dislikes are gross, and in some they are very subtle. Sensitivity is the prerogative of a poet, an artist, a painter or a scientist. They have a high degree of sensitivity because of which they are able to see something more than what meets the eye. This becomes a problem generally, because, the more sensitive you are, the more vulnerable you

become in terms of reaction. You don't require any calamity to happen to upset you. Even a change of weather brings a frown in your face. Why? Because you don't have the strength. But to be sensitive is to be strong; to be powerful is to be gentle. If I am sensitive, I must have a cushion to absorb. A mind that is not backed up by a cushion of attitude, an attitude that is born of understanding, cannot be strong.

HOW TO CHANGE THE ATTITUDE

A man loves a girl and wants to marry her. On the eve of marriage he discovers that as a child she was lost once in a big festival and that she was brought up by her foster parents. He remembers that his own sister was lost at that festival long ago. He enquires further and finds out that she is his own lost sister. Now his attitude is different. He has discovered his lost sister. His attitude has totally changed, and he cannot now have the same attitude to her as he had before. This change has been brought about by knowledge. Unless this discovery takes place, he cannot really bring about such a change. Any amount of entreaty by others to treat her as his sister would not bring about the change. It would remain only as a conditioning. So too, a sensitive mind which is told to develop a cushion can do so only if it is based on knowledge, an attitude based on an understanding. What is that attitude? This attitude is called *prasāda buddhi*—glad acceptance of the results of action as coming from the Lord. For this appreciation to set in, one must understand His glories and see what we really can claim to be our own in life.

WHAT DO YOU OWN IN LIFE?

In this life, what all we have does not belong to us. Always we should remember that we are the ones who have come to visit this place. We are visitors in this planet. We are born here, unlike the beings coming in flying saucers, if there are any such saucers! We have come under a short or long visa, the period being not known to us. Since we have arrived, we are

going to disappear. When we arrived, we did not bring many things. We did not come with the necessary amount of oxygen in cylinders or tons of food to last for sixty to eighty years. We were all born with a very small physical body. When the body came, it came with certain potentialities of growth, all kept within that body. Even the eyes were closed, we did not talk, hear, smell or taste. We just started breathing the fresh air. When we came, we found that there seemed to be a perfect understanding of our necessities on the part of nature or God. We had only the nose but no oxygen. In this physico-psycho-physio-complex, I find everything is meaningful. It seems I also came to an all-provided guest house. Outside, things are arranged well; plants take up our carbon dioxide and give oxygen. Thus mutually we can live, helping each other. That is how nature is designed. Eyes started seeing, and saw the forms and colours that were there already in the creation; ears heard all those sounds that were there. If tastes were not there, the tongue would be redundant. If forms were not there, the eyes would be redundant. Many things necessary for our survival we all know, including animals. Stone-Age men knew the main things. I am blessed with the intellect which is capable of knowing, discovering. The various medicines we discover have been there, and we only made use of our reason to discover this. All that we have discovered are only things that are already there. It is not something that we have created. That is what *Bhagavān* says in the tenth chapter.

You cannot have any authorship to any of these found in the creation. You cannot count even a single thing of which you are the sole author. If you are not the author, you cannot be the owner. The author is the owner, the creator is the owner. Whoever has created it, it is his property. He is the owner. You have not created anything.

You cannot say, this business empire you created. For this you must first be there; but you did not author your own physical body! Your business house stands in a place which you did not create. The building that you have there, you

did not make; even the architect did not create the material. The laws because of which the building is standing, the materials with which the building is constructed, all these are drawn from the creation. The brick is not your creation; it was made possible by the Lord by providing the clay. Which exactly is your creation? You cannot name a single thing.

The biggest notion of ownership we find is among apartment dwellers of high-rise buildings. Let us take one who owns a flat, one of the apartments in the third floor of a five-storeyed building, and see what he owns. He calls it his own house. What does he own in that apartment? Without owning the ground on which the building stands, how can he own the flat? We do not know! He does not own all the apartments on the same floor. Setting aside this, let us see what he owns. In that "own" apartment, the floor he does not own; it is the ceiling of the fellow down below. The ceiling also he is not the owner of, as that is the floor of the one on the next floor. The sidewall on the left happens to be right sidewall of his neighbour. The right sidewall is naturally the left sidewall of the neighbour. He cannot say he owns space . . . that way one can own up the entire space! But still he knows that he is the owner! It is not given to him to be an owner. Ownership is only a notion.

To say I own a given flat only means that I do not own other flats in the building, other buildings on the street, the city, the state, the country . . . cosmos. It is this sense of limitation that automatically follows the very notion of ownership.

I can say I possess something, but to say I own is due to ignorance. On and in the land things are provided. What is that that I have created in this world? You may say cars and other appliances are created; you have not, because everything which you have created is a possible thing. A possible thing that was once considered impossible, you might have made using all the materials already available. Going to the moon and coming back was a possible achievement. Going to

the sun and coming back is not. Possibilities are provided for you; with your intellect you explore, seek and make use of. This is true of any achievement of the modern age.

GLORIES OF THE MAKER

Therefore *Bhagavān* says in the tenth chapter that any glory that exists anywhere is Himself. He says, " Because I am the material cause for the entire creation, any glory in the creation is mine. Air blows, it is Myself; the sun shines, it is Myself; the wisdom in a wise man is Myself; if there is a strong man, I am the strength in him. Any extraordinary glory am I. If anybody is able to sing, that voice is a gift of Me; it is not that it has been created by the singer; he makes use of and makes it perfect. If the eyes can see, it is My glory; if ears can hear, it is My glory. Whether anything is extraordinary, or where there is a certain ray of glory, you must see Me there. Though everywhere I am, see Me in these special things. Among mountains I am the Himalayas, among the peaks I am the Everest, among rivers I am the Ganga. I cannot complete My glories." There is no special power for anybody. All fame belongs to *Bhagavān*. That is why in India great musicians always sing only His glories and not the glories of the passing guy. They recognize it is His glory that they can sing. Famous sculptors only made the Lord's forms. Even dance in India is not the kind of dance for getting a kick; it is offered as a dedication at the altar of the Lord. The dancer would not dance away from the presence of the Lord. " This anatomy is beautiful, I am not the author of even this body "—she appreciates this fact and dances only in His presence.

WHO OWNS YOUR BODY?

No one can claim anything to be his; least of all his own body! Your mother claims your body as she brought it forth and brought up too; your father claims it because he is the *nimitta kāraṇa*; it is because of him you came and grew. Your wife comes and says the body belongs to her by the

sacrament of marriage. Your employer can claim your body because he is paying. The State also has a claim, as you are a citizen of this country. You have got duties to the country. Vegetables, wheat and rice can claim this body because of which you are here. If one is a meat eater, every goat and chicken can claim him. The earth has a claim because of which everything is born. Finally, the earth will have you. Fire can claim you because of which you have the temperature maintained as long as you are alive. Water can claim you because of which you are having a shape. Air can claim you, but for which creation would not be possible. Space always has a claim as you appropriate some space, moving and living in space. The bugs in your body of course have a claim because for generations they have been in the body. It is their home, the inherited one! In spite of all these, a man says, "This is my body!" Understand that ownership is a notion. You don't own your body, or anything outside. Even the knowledge you have got is not solely authored by you—you got it from so many teachers who taught you grammar, language, mathematics. . . . Thus any of your gains you owe to hundreds and thousands of factors and even to the five elements. You live and enjoy things that are provided. Therefore, "Arjuna, appreciate that I am everything." The Lord says

Yadyad vibhūtimat sattvam śrīmad ūrjitameva vā
Tattadevāvagaccha tvam mama tejomśa sambhavam.

(X-41)

"Any glory, wealth, beauty or prosperity is all Myself, know them all to be but a spark of My glory."

I am your hands, eyes, ears,. . .where is the question of your claiming anything? Have a right attitude of *prasāda*, and you will find your mind is totally different. You are in a world full and complete, provided with all things. Having entered therein, enjoy the world. Thus He finishes the tenth chapter.

THE COSMIC PERSON

In the eleventh chapter He shows the vision of the cosmic person. Arjuna asks for it. He asks, "I understand that you are the material cause, you wield the whole creation. I cannot see all your forms at once with these eyes; can I see your cosmic form? Give me some eye with which I can see in you the entire creation." He gives him the special vision so that in the one form of Kṛṣṇa, Arjuna saw the whole creation. He sees the earth, sky, all animals—all in one form.

I look upon objects as different because I pull myself out of the object and see it as different from me. If I pull out of myself, then I am one Awareness alone, in me the whole creation stands. This is the real cosmic vision by knowledge. Arjuna had a vision of it. With a stroke of Kṛṣṇa's *māyā* he saw: He saw himself, he saw beautiful things, he also saw frightful things. He saw Bhiṣma, Droṇa, all under the cosmic form's jaws of death; he saw them being crushed in the mouth of time and masticated. He saw the handwork of time in a dramatic way.

Lord Death comes along with you when you are born. Every wrinkle and grey hair you have is the work of death, time, that changes things out of shape. He saw this work of time at one place and time, all compressed in a short span of time, and he got frightened. He begs of the Lord to come back to his own form. He says, "You seem to be one blaze of fire, out to consume the whole world. Come back to your original form, dark, beautiful Kṛṣṇa." Having shown him this vision, *Bhagavān* says, "Now you know that there is such a thing as the total. Don't stand separate from the total. See My glories; your mind, sense organs, body, let them all appreciate Me all the time. The things you see are Me, are because of Me, the thing that makes you see is Me. The more you appreciate this, you will find that the world is so beautiful that there is nothing for you to complain." Natuarlly, the next topic is about devotion to the Lord which is dealt with in the twelfth chapter.

What is Devotion?

INTRODUCTION

The vision of the Lord was unfolded in chapters seven through eleven. While the first six chapters dealt predominantly with *jīva*, the individual, the second group of six chapters deal with the glories of the Lord. The previous chapters were dealing with the Truth of the Lord, and the eleventh chapter gave the cosmic vision of the Lord. We found that *Īśvara* is the efficient and material cause of creation, that the Lord is not totally distinct from the individual from the absolute standpoint. From the standpoint of your essential self, both are identical, both enjoy their truth in *Sat Cit Ānanda*—existence, awareness, limitlessness. The limitless Awareness is the meaning of the word "I" of every individual and the Lord. That vision being one, however, there is a difference between the Lord and you. If you look from the standpoint of your two hands and two legs, you are limited, your form is included in the Lord's cosmic vision. This Lord can create your body. In the entire anatomy of the physical body, you abide. Similarly the Lord abides in you. If the Lord's figure is whole, behind Him and you is the common basis that is *Sat* and *Cit*. This whole thing can be viewed from the total standpoint. If you are really separate, and He is separate, there cannot be a total vision. Like the wave and ocean having their being in water, you and God have being in Awareness.

THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE TOTAL

The wave can view from the standpoint of the ocean, the total, or from the standpoint of the wave, the individual. From the standpoint of the wave, it is a limited one, born a minute before

and subject to death. From the same individual standpoint, the wave can look upon the ocean as including its form also. If the wave cannot appreciate itself as water, it can easily appreciate the fact that the ocean is that because of which the wave is born, sustained, and unto which it goes back and thus surrenders to the Lord, the Ocean.

If you cannot appreciate the common truth of *Brahma* and you take yourself only as a *jīva*, appreciate that the cause for the total is the Lord, who is the *nimitta upādāna kāraṇam*, the efficient and material cause. At the end of the eleventh chapter, having given the cosmic vision to Arjuna, he was told

> *Matkarmakṛt matparamaḥ madbhaktaḥ sangavarjitaḥ*
> *Nirvairassarva bhūteṣu yaḥ sa māmeti pāṇdava.* (XI-55)

"For that person who performs action, not able to get the truth of Myself which is himself, this should be possible. Let all his actions be performed for My sake. Let him appreciate himself and understand what is expected of him, see the harmony in creation, understand that certain things are expected of him in the society, and do these things remembering Me all the time. Let him be free from any ill-feeling to all beings. He will reach Me."

He is like a *bhṛtya* (an obedient servant , goes about doing jobs, all the time remembering the master behind; in every action his own personal dislikes and likes don't come. He does it because it is the will of his master, and so he does it. This is called *svāmī bhṛtya nyāya*—master-servant *nyāya*. I don't create any disharmony, and do my work to the best of my ability as my duty. In a duty-based society, each one does one's duty. The rights are naturally achieved. If one demands, there would only be fight. Duty-based society is one where each one does his bit and is humble. Even the king appreciates that he is ruling as a trustee. The citizens also have the same attitude to the king. A society aware of duty is an ideal society. For this you appreciate your position not as an accidental being. One should not take oneself as an unfor-

tunate accident but as a logical incident. If this appreciation is there, you will find yourself important. Along with this you will appreciate your role, your place, and your usefulness. This will lead to non-condemnation of yourself, and you come with a certain purpose with all limbs and head over shoulders. Make use of it, see the whole plan, everything will become meaningful. If I see only a segment, an event in my life, I will have reasons to complain, but if I am able to see with a wider vision, there will not be any complaint. *Bhagavān* says that it is not just wider but it should be cosmic. "Take Me into account, *matkarma kṛt*; in my cosmic form you are included." In your anatomy each does its part. So it is in the cosmic pattern. "Understand Me, I am there very much. Thus seeing Me all the time, perform the action; you will become *matkarmakṛt*—one who does actions for Me."

If you cannot do this, do your work, achieve what you want. When the results come, at least remember Me, have *prasāda buddhi*; you again become a *matkarmakṛt*. Such a one who enjoys an attitude like this, he is *madbhaktaḥ*—his mind will abide in Me; all that I talked will become daylight for him. If you accept any result of action as *prasāda*, you cannot have any enmity to anybody in this world; you are *nirvairaḥ*—one who has no enmity in him! If my teeth bit my tongue, I don't knock off my teeth. This is not poetic nor philosophical, but something everyone has to become aware of. You extend your vision, all beings are included; you are not separate as an individual, with an isolated physical body, isolated from the total. Such a one who appreciates this vision cannot entertain any enmity to another person. It is not a mere ethical value for him. It is impossible for him to bear enmity because he appreciates that he is part of the total. The Lord says, *māmeti* —such a person finally reaches Me totally!* First it is an

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* This is seen clearly when we cast the horoscope when a child is born. You don't see the position of your neighbours and cast it, but you only look up and see the constellations and draw the horoscope. The birth of a child is an event taking place in time and place. Because there is a rhythm in this system, in the universe, if this single event of birth is taken note of with reference to this system, it is as well an event in the whole cosmos.

appreciation, understanding, an attitude. The mind assumes a disposition, there is less restlessness and sorrow for that mind and that cheerful mind will see the truth unfolded by this teaching. Therefore, *māmeti*—he will become one with Me—like the wave discovering that " I am water " becomes one with the ocean without motion.

WHAT IS DEVOTION?

To this Arjuna asks a relevant question, and thus the twelfth chapter begins. He asks

Evam satata yuktā ye bhaktāstvām paryupāsate
Yecāpyakṣaramavyaktam teṣām ke yoga vittamāh.

(XII-1)

" Is it good that I look upon you as Lord, *Īśvara*? Or, is it better that I withdraw myself and meditate upon *Ātmā*, as *Sat Cit Ānanda*, freed from the world, from the sense objects? Those who are pursuing the truth of themselves, free from all limitations, which is the subject, are they *uttamāḥ*, better? Or those who surrender to you and go about doing actions? Who will reach you?"

Bhagavān laughs, perhaps because Arjuna has not given up this question since the third chapter: whether *Karma Yoga* is better or *sannyāsa* is better! *Bhagavān* says, " The one who goes about with his work, not forgetting Me, is better. Why? If you are ready for what I say, you would not ask this question now. I have to say it is better for you because YOU ask this question. The question is not what is better, but what do you require? If your mind is free from likes and dislikes, you will not ask this question; contemplation will be natural to your mind. That mind which is not contemplative cannot contemplate even if it is told to. You can give him a separate cave, he may sit there all the time, but his mind will not become contemplative. Contemplation, like love, cannot be whipped up from you. It is something that has got to

take place. It takes the mind that enjoys a certain disposition to contemplate." So *Bhagavān* says

Mayyāveśya mano ye māṁ nityayuktā upāsate
S'raddhayā parayopetāḥ te me yuktatamā matāḥ. (XII-2)

"According to Me, Arjuna, they are *yukta tamāḥ*, indeed the most exalted people; those with great *śraddha*, alertness, thinking, will be blessed with this freedom; let the mind dwell in Me, do actions, but never lose sight of Me. Even when they achieve results, they remember Me. The one who retains his awareness in Me, does not have the ego."

Everybody thinks he is the apple of the creation, the very salt of creation. This I, which feels "*Konyosti sadṛśo mayā*—who is equal to me ?"—alone is going to get knocked because the other one also thinks exactly like this. If two egos come, there will be strife, regret, failure, loss of peace and joy. Thus your demand for the society to appreciate you is due to ignorance. Leave alone *Brahma*, at least appreciate this: "Everything is given to me, I don't have authorship over anything." Even your body, as we have seen, can be claimed by all things and beings! With this "I am the body" notion, *ahamkāra* and *mamakāra,* the notional "I" and "mine", man becomes small. With this feeling of smallness he goes about to become limitless! Possession in itself is not wrong, but to think "I own things" shows only lack of appreciation of the Lord and the totality.

RELATIVE AND FUNDAMENTAL RELATION OF MAN

You are not an ordinary person, like you there is nobody. This applies to everybody. If you have doubt, see the impression of your thumb! Each one is a peculiar creation. The one who has no self-condemnation, he alone is a *bhakta*—devotee. False humility does not make one a *bhakta*, nor pride will make one a *bhakta*. The one who appreciates one's importance, plays one's role and appreciates His glories, is

really a *bhakta*. He is not a spasmodic *bhakta*. Everyone brings out of himself, moment to moment, a relative person. Father, husband, son, uncle, master, servant, like this I have different roles. Each one is "I", but is only one "I" that assumes different roles. In these relationships there is no beauty; there is only difference and displeasure. If your relations are different, you bring out of yourself only a relative person to bear upon the world. In none of the roles I would have a chance to appreciate myself totally unless I know "It". These roles are there only when the particular relationships are there; objects and individuals change, roles also change. But in all these relationships one does not change—that I am related to the total as individual to the total, to the Creator, called the Lord, as the created, called *jīva*, does not change. This is a fundamental relationship of every being in this world. Think carefully.

Whether you like it or not, each one IS related to the Lord. You may disown this, but still you ARE related. A leaf may disown the tree, but it is a part of the total, tree. What is the relation between Him and you? He is the Creator, I am the created; He is the Sustainer, I am the sustained; He is the Destroyer, I am the destroyed; He is the giver of fruits of action, I am the doer; in fact He is the Lord and I am the devotee. Can the Lord go out of sight to a devotee who appreciates this? When you see your father, the son is born, but when you see your son, the father is born, and the son is gone. Relationship with individuals thus is peculiar and distinct. But my relationship to the total, the Lord, is it distinct and peculiar? I am created, my father is created, my grandfather is created, my uncle, grandson, friend, enemy, mountain, river . . . all are created, and He is the Creator. If that is so, what kind of devotee are you? If I am as an individual, and I appreciate this fact, I am a devotee who cannot go out of sight. I am fundamentally a devotee; this relation cannot go out of sight. As a *jīva* I am related to the Lord; it is a fundamental relationship. Therefore, I am a devotee first and last. So the devotee is father, son, uncle, friend, enemy. Any role any-

body plays, it is only a devotee who plays the role. I am a devotee first and last; hence how can I ever miss Him?

The problem is, now I am a devotee only in the *pūjā* room. Outside, I am a businessman. I am only a spasmodic devotee. I may have some bouts of devotion whenever I see a temple; if they are gone, I am not a devotee. If I am fundamentally a devotee, this cannot be so. The Lord is not like a contestant in an election for you to vote him in or out.

A cook by profession, who has a flare for music, when he sings, he is only "a cook who sings." If he studies music very well and finally becomes a great musician, and, when he cooks, he is "the great musician who cooks!" Now he is first and last a musician. See the transformation. He may discover music in the boiling of water or in the noise of a moving train; he is no more a spasmodic musician. Similarly, to make a spasmodic devotee a permanent devotee, there are temples in all villages. He may lose himself due to sorrow, or become big and arrogant and lose himself; he may lose his awareness of his relation to the total. To see that he appreciates his relation, so that he cannot miss the Lord, in all places you see temples. That is why the temple tower or the steeple of the church is so high that he would not lose sight of it. This is to make him remember that He is there in whatever you do or think, so that you may all the time gracefully accept His blessing. By this your *ahamkāra*, "I"-ness, can be destroyed.

PERMANENT DEVOTION

If you are a *bhakta*, you can understand what is surrender. You are always a devotee, not a morning devotee or Sunday devotee or Friday devotee. It is the devotee that wakes up, cooks food, eats food, goes to work, transacts business. If you are a devotee, the problems belong to Him, not to you. Only if you lose yourself problems will be there. All problems will be only due to the relative roles you play, as an officer or an industrialist, or a householder or a cook; but as a devotee

you have no problem. The Lord does not need anything from you.

INVOCATION AND WORSHIP

You may break a coconut to the Lord or do ritualistic worship because, by this, your fanciful mind may appreciate Him. When you invoke Him in any form, may it be a cross or crescent or a lump of turmeric powder, you don't worship that form but the Lord whom you see on that. I invoke Him so that even this ritualistic worship can go on unhindered! You make a lump of turmeric and invoke Him as the Lord. Appreciate this fact, it is not a mere idol that you worship.

Everybody is an idol worshipper anyway. If you appreciate a scientist who discovered something and was given an award, why should you shake his hand? His mind only discovered and not his hands! Who is not an idolator?—when you shake hands or hoist a flag, you are an idolator. Nobody worships idols, everybody worships the Lord. In space you can worship the Lord. At Cidambaram in South India, space is worshipped as the Lord because the Lord is every form including space! I don't worship space but the Lord. People look upon the idol not as idol but have the vision of the Lord. Anything I offer, a flower or coconut, does not go to the idol of clay or stone but to the Lord I invoke.

All this worship is to help to bring out the devotee in me. You go to the temple and pray

Jaya jagadīśa hare! svāmi dīnanātha hare!
Tan man dhan sab terā sab kuch hai terā!

"All the wealth is yours; what is my wealth, my body and mind belongs to you, of all this you are the author, owner. O Lord!" You keep on repeating the same every day. If you have really offered, what is the need to repeat the same every day? But still you do. Does this mean you bluff to the Lord too? No. This does not mean that you are telling a lie. But this chant is

repeated daily so that you can slowly convert yourself into a real devotee. You can become fundamentally a devotee: You become a devotee first and devotee last. All relations then become secondary. For such a devotee, there can be no problem. This alone is real surrender. Total surrender is the same as knowledge. You may sing His glory in any language. It is not the language that matters, but what matters is what attitude you have. *Bhagavān* says

Patram puṣpam phalam toyam
yo me bhaktyā prayacchati
Tadaham bhaktyupahṛtam
aśnāmi prayatātmanaḥ. (IX-26)

" Whatever is offered, a leaf, a flower, a fruit or water, is offered with devotion, I take them. You need not offer anything. Even mentally you can offer; that will be sufficient to Me. What is important is only your attitude." It is you who stand isolated from Him. You have got to meet this iceberg of ego which, though standing in water, stands as crystallized and separated. You do worship to melt away this crystallized ego. Even while you act for achieving, you remember Him when you get the result. By that you neutralize your likes and dislikes. Your ego is thinned. One with this thinned ego, one with such a mind alone can discover that the Lord and I are the same. For that wave which has discovered, which has realized I am the ocean, there is consummation or culmination of the life of devotion. For, any individual starts off as a limited being. He finally reaches a stage where he appreciates he is the same as the Lord. Therefore, if you are a devotee, you can discover yourself as *jñānī*. So don't ask which is better or which is worse. In fact, the *Yoga* of Devotion is the same as *karma*. That element which makes you a *Karma Yogi* is called *bhakti*. *Karma Yoga* is indeed *Bhakti Yoga*. Kṛṣṇa does'nt differentiate there—much less S'ankara in his commentary on the *Gītā*.

16

Knower, Known, and Knowledge

TOTAL SURRENDER—TOTAL MERGER—KNOWLEDGE

Each one is an occasional devotee. Though I am fundamentally related to the Lord as individual to the total, I am only a relative devotee: only when I think of the Lord, I am devotee; if I don't think, I lose myself. This is an unfortunate situation and, therefore, I have to bring out the devotee in me. This I do when I offer prayers. Until one discovers oneself a permanent devotee, not losing sight of the presence of the Lord in the outside, the world, as the phenomena and the laws, within oneself in the physical body, sense organs, etc., one has got to be a devotee. One comes to express himself or herself as a devotee when one offers prayers. So, various forms of worship like *kirtan*, *japa*, ritualistic worship, etc., are available. They all become prayers for the devotee to be brought into being. Until a man becomes a musician, he goes on practising singing till it becomes natural to him. Similarly, all forms of prayer become very releavant if I understand that I have to discover in myself a devotee. That devotee is the one who can discover the identity with the Lord. The real devotee is one who is identical with the Lord. *Bhakti* is defined as

Parama prema svarūpā bhaktiḥ (*Nārada Bhakti Sūtra* 1)

"Absolute love is *bhakti*."

If it is absolute love, it does not involve two entities. Even in the ordinary form of love between two separate individuals, separation is fused in emotional identity. For the Lord, if love is total, this love resolves the self; this *parama prema*

dissolves the individual. In the Lord I cannot dissolve myself because He is all. People say that *bhakti* is easy. Even to offer a flower is not easy because *ahamkāra* (ego) is so much. Even cultural salutations to elders we don't offer due to *ahamkāra*. A man with a big ego cannot place a flower at the altar of an idol unless he has some appreciation of the Lord. Surrender is not easy till you discover some appreciation of the Lord. It is not easy to love; it has to happen. You should create in the mind some condition. At least don't create some conditions in your mind that dam the expression of love. To ask whether the path of *bhakti*, love, is better than *jñānam*, knowledge, is only childish. For perfect love or surrender to take place, it is as good as you are not there! The individual is not there to dissolve in the Lord. Only if he is separate he can dissolve, like a salt crystal in water. There is only one Lord who expresses inside and outside; the individual is a notion; he is not there: all is the Lord. If he dissolves, it is more like the wave dissolving into the ocean; what has gone is only a notion. Your notion—the wave notion—that you are different, is dissolved in the ocean of knowledge. Total surrender and complete knowledge are thus identical.

That is why *Bhagavān* does not make any distinction between the fulfilled *bhakti* and knowledge. That is why *Bhagavān* has been dodging Arjuna's question—"Tell me, which one is better?" This is his question in all the chapters from the third. The *Karma Yogi* gives up *karma phala*—concern for the fruit of action. Because he has likes and dislikes, things to do, he cannot give up *karma*—activity. Activity brings about purification in him if he has the right attitude, and this is *Karma Yoga*. By taking result as *prasāda*, you have the attitude of *karma phala tyāga*—renunciation of the fruit of action, and you get *śānti*—peace. It is that mind which is going to discover the peace that he is.

The *sannyāsī* gives up activities for the sake of knowledge. He who has no likes and dislikes, for him *sannyāsa* is natural. The very field you are afraid of, you have to grow out of. If I am afraid of the world, I must be in the world and become a master

of it. I can then leave it or get along with it because I am a master. If you want to leave, you better stay and grow out of it. This is the very essence of the *Gītā*. All along He harps on the same string. Though repetition is wrong, because it is teaching, it is accepted. A teacher's concern is to see that he is understood all the time. If there is any chance that he is not understood or is misunderstood, he comes back again and repeats. The twelfth chapter was entitled the *Yoga* of Devotion though it is nothing but *Karma Yoga*. What makes a *Karma Yogi* is *bhakti*—devotion. *Bhagavān* said before in the third chapter that there are only two modes of pursuit; one involves the life of a monk, a life of renunciation. If we are ready for it, fine. Otherwise, pursue knowledge doing action. One who has burnt all the boats for the pursuit of knowledge is a *sannyāsī*. You don't lose anything by doing action. From the second chapter on, He talks of *Karma Yoga*, whether it is the ninth, tenth, eleventh, or the twelfth chapter. Thus he says in the eleventh chapter, "If you cannot appreciate Me, any action you do, treat it as *matkarma*—My action, or, when you do action, appreciate Me when *karma phala* comes. Then what comes of this *tyāga* is peace. By this your mind will be enjoying peace.

ARJUNA'S QUESTION

At this stage the thirteenth chapter begins. Arjuna asks a question

> *Prakṛtim puruṣamcaiva kṣetram kṣetrajñameva ca*
> *Etadyeditumicchāmi jñānam jñeyam ca keśava.* (XIII-1)

"O Lord! I have heard these words, *Puruṣa* and *prakṛti*; you have not dealt with them. I have also heard *kṣetra* and *Kṣetrajña*, and *jñānam* and *jñeyam*. What are they? These I would like to hear from you." Thus he asks for the meaning of three pairs of words.

WHAT IS *KSETRA?*

Answering this, *Bhagavān* begins

Idam śarīram kaunteya kṣetramityabhidhīyate. (XIII-2)

This body is called *kṣetra*. Not only this body, but anything that falls within the field of experience is called *kṣetra*. Nobody thinks that what he experiences is himself; these objects which I see are not myself. It is very clear. Nobody need tell me I am not a tree or a donkey. Nobody need tell me I am not a bug. That is why *Bhagavān* omits what you already know in the initial statement. But you take the body as yourself. Therefore, He says, " Arjuna, *idam śarīram*—this physical body, that is subject to your perception, O Son of Kunti, though you have the notion that you are the body, it is only *kṣetra*."

The Lord tells Arjuna what is *kṣetra*, the phenomenal world:

Mahā bhūtānyahaṃkāro buddhiravyaktam eva ca
Indriyāṇi daśaikam ca pañcacendriya gocarāḥ. (XIII-6)

Whatever you are aware of, space, air, fire, water, earth—the five elements, *ahamkāra*, the ego, *buddhi*, the deciding faculty, are all *kṣetra*. Decisive *vṛttis*, thoughts, doubts, all are within you. The doubt called *manaḥ*, the five sense organs, the five sense objects—sounds, forms, touch, colours, smells and tastes—all these are the *kṣetra*, objects; they are in you. Again, likes and dislikes, pleasures, misery, fortitude, any given form of knowledge, *avyaktam*, ignorance, the state that obtains in sleep, all this is *kṣetra*.

WHO IS KṢETRAJÑA?

" I am born; one day I will die; I am a mortal ", this conviction is born out of your taking the body as " I ". Otherwise, how can " I " be mortal? That your body is mortal is a fact, but " I am mortal " is an error. The one who is aware of, conscious of, this physical body as well as this phenomenal world, the *kṣetra*, that person indeed is *Kṣetrajñaḥ*. One who

knows is a *jñanī*, one who knows the *kṣetra*, the body, is the *Kṣetrajñaḥ*, subject " I ". Who is the one who is aware of this physical body and anything that is inside of this body, aware of the experiences of hunger and thirst, aware of various forms of doubts and conditions of mind, aware of the knowledge of a given thing, of the knowledge of being happy or unhappy, of the notion of the doer, of the enjoyer? He is the *Kṣetrajñaḥ*, knower. This *Kṣetrajñaḥ* is not limited. " I " am the centre who is the one due to whom I become the seer, hearer, smeller, taster, thinker, doubter, knower; one thing that is common in all these experiences is " I ". " I " is the Awareness I AM. S'ankara says the same in the *Dakṣināmūrti Stotram*

Nānācchidra ghatodarasthita mahā
dīpā prabhā bhāsvaram
Jñānam yasya tu cakṣurādi karaṇa
dvārā bahispandate
Jānāmīti tameva bhāntam anubhātī
etat samastam jagat
Tasmai śrī gurumūrtaye nama idam
śrī dakṣiṇāmūrtaye. (4)

Here is a pot with five holes in a room which is pitch dark. I place a light in the pot. From the pot five beams of light emerge. The five beams of light will illumine objects falling within the tracks of the beams. In between if there is anything, it will not illumine. Only those that fall within the scope of beams will be illumined. If you take your physical body as a fragile pot with five apertures called sense organs—which are as though apertures: eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and skin—if this is a pot and the five sense organs are holes, the light which lights up things, and within whose light things fall, is *Kṣetrajñaḥ*. That light is Awareness. The " I " in this body, Awareness, obtains in these five sense organs. Therefore, one source of light, Awareness, through the eyes, lights up forms and colours. Light in the pot,the body, being one, the same light "I", through the ears, lights up only those objects—sounds. Similarly,

through the nostrils, smell; tongue, taste; skin, various forms of touch. The five beams of light themselves are nothing but one light. Now, if I am light, you are light, each one is light, that light, *Bhagavān* says in the next verse, is indeed Myself.

Kṣetrajñam cāpi mām viddhi sarva kṣetreṣu bhārata.
(XIII-3)

You think that you are different from everybody else because you take your body, intellect, mind, etc., as "I". But if you know what that "I" is, *Kṣetrajñaḥ*, you will see that all differences exist in the *kṣetra*, the phenomenal world, and not in *Kṣetrajñaḥ*. *Kṣetrajñaḥ*, Awareness, indeed is the basis of all forms.

KṢETRAJÑA, JÑEYAM AND PURUṢA

All the six questions of Arjuna, on *kṣetra*, *prakṛti*, *Kṣetrajñaḥ*, *Puruṣa*, *Jñeyam*, and *jñānam*, are taken together and answered by Kṛṣṇa. The *Kṣetrajñaḥ* alone is *Jñeyam*, to be known, to be discovered—to be "I", Awareness. He indeed is *Puruṣa*. *Puruṣa* means *pūrṇaḥ*, he is full, who abides in all bodies. Kṛṣṇa says in the beginning of the thirteenth chapter

Kṣetrajñam cāpi mām viddhi
sarva kṣetreṣu bhārata. (XIII-3)

"Arjuna, know me to be the *Kṣetrajñaḥ*, the indweller in everybody. This physical body is a great chemical complex, and this body is a city with sense organs functioning as intelligence officers. There is one who lives in this city. He is the *Svāmi*. Who is that one, the one who sits in this body and transacts business in this world? He is *Puruṣa*. He is *Jñeyam*, to be known. He is *Param Brahma*. All that you see is *prakṛti*, *kṣetra*. 'The entire *prakṛti*—creation, is born of me,'" the Lord says.

The creation is inert; it has no *Caitanya*—consciousness. Who can create? The inert by itself cannot create; it has to be vivified. This physical body is inert, I am aware: mere

packing of carbon, calcium, nitrogen and phosphorous; all are packed; that body cannot speak. That is not conscious. You may program it like a computer, it is still not conscious. Consciousness is not manifest. But this physical body is a sentient body. It is so becuase Awareness is manifest in this physical body, the *kṣetra*. Creation being apparent, naturally, for this apparent creation, the *kṣetra*, there is the material cause which is called *prakṛti*, *māyā*. The one who wields *māyā* is *Īśvara*, the Lord, who is nothing but *Sat Cit Ānanda Brahma*. With reference to the total creation, he is *Īśvara*. With reference to this world, the Lord as the material cause is called *prakṛti*, *māyā*, the *S'akti* or Goddess. The same Lord, as the intelligent cause for this creation, is called God, *Īśvara*, The essential reality of the Lord, however, is the Self, Awareness, " I ", *Brahman*, who has no gender, form or quality

Talking of *Kṣetrajñaḥ*, Kṛṣṇa adds

Anādimatparam brahma na sattannāsaducyate. (XIII-13)

From its own standpoint, the "Self" is *param*, not limited by space, because it has no form. Whatever everybody knows, fall within Awareness. That Awareness is not bound by time; because of this alone you are aware of time. It is not born within the scope of time. *Kṣetrajñaḥ* is Awareness in whose scope concepts of time and space are. Whether it is objective time or subjective time, both are existing in " I " Awareness alone. All things appreciated by you are one Awareness alone. Therefore it is *anādi*, it has no beginning, it is limitless, called *Brahma*—big, the limitless, infinite. *Kṣetrajñaḥ* is that which is beyond existence and non-existence. That man exists is a fact. That he has no horns is also a fact; and the one who knows both is *Kṣetrajñaḥ*. That is the real " I ". It is that because of which I am aware of *Sat*, what is, and *asat*, what is not. Both of them " I " know.

With reference to creation He said earlier, "*Matsthāni, sarvabhūtāni*: *Mayātatamidam sarvam*—all beings are in Me, by Me everything is pervaded." Now he adds, "I am

the same as *Param Brahma*, limitless, the cause for the whole creation." *Īśvara* is *Param Brahma* plus what is called *prakṛti*, *māyā*, which is the whole creation. When I look at *Brahma*, *Sat Cit Ānanda*, that is *anādi*, *param*, for the total creation he is the creator, the *Kṣetrajnaḥ*, the *Puruṣa*. Thus He is *kṣetra-Kṣetrajñaḥ*, or *Puruṣa-prakṛti*, or *māyopahita Caitanya*, Consciousness conditioned by *māyā*. For, *Puruṣa* is *Caitanya*—conscious; *prakṛti* is *jada*—inert; both brought together is *Īśvara*, thereby the whole creation. *Prakṛti* cannot stand apart from that limitless, "I". Therefore, from the standpoint of creation

Sarvataḥ pāṇipādam tat sarvatokṣi śiromukham
Sarvataḥ śrutimalloke sarvamāvṛtya tiṣṭhati. (XIII-14)

"It covers everything. It is all hands, feet, the organs of action; it is all eyes, ears, the organs of perception."

"I" am the one whose hands and legs are all over. That wave which knows it is water, can say, "I am the Atlantic and the Pacific." Like this you can say, "*Sarvataḥ pāṇipādoham*—my hands and legs are all over." Being limitless, I can say from that standpoint, in common with the Lord, "I am you. You are everything. Therefore, I indeed am everything." The beauty of this is, in reality

Sarvendriya guṇābhāsam sarvendriya vivarjitam
Asaktam sarvabhṛccaiva nirguṇam guṇa bhoktṛ ca. (XIII-15)

"I am because of whom all the objects that sense organs perceive, shine—sounds, forms, smells, etc. I am the *Kṣetrajñaḥ*—knower of the world, *Puruṣa*, *Jñeyaḥ*—the one to be known. But from the standpoint of Myself, I am *sarvendriya vivarjitam*—in Me there are no ears, no nose. I am free from all sense organs." Even electricity can say, "I am all fans, I am all lights, I am all refrigerators, I am all air-conditioners, I am all heaters, I am free from all of them." Only one who is free from all of them can be all of them. Space can say, "I am everything because I pervade everything and I am also free

from everything." I, being all-pervasive, am not attached to any particular thing. But, *sarvabhṛt*—sustaining everything, I am the one from whom everything is born, by whom everything is sustained, and in whom everything resolves.

Therefore

Upadraṣṭānumantā ca bhartā bhoktā maheśvaraḥ. (XIII-23)

" I " am the one who permeates everything, *upadraṣṭā*, one who witnesses anything. *Ātmā* is *asaktaḥ*, it does not interfere in your affairs, and permits your mind to do anything. That is why one may be a wise man, the other will be another wise man. It does not create good thoughts or bad thoughts. These thoughts come and go only in the mind. One who is educated has right values, so he is good. You don't brand one as bright and another as dull electrcity. Like a street lamp allows you to do whatever you want, shining its light, *Ātmā* is *upadraṣṭā*. Light is not going to be happy or miserable because good or bad things happen under it. So too, " I " Awareness, free from any quaiity, sustains all qualities. He is again *vibhakteṣu avibhaktam*, not divided among divided things; like space is not divided, but looks divided from the standpoint of walls. *Bhagavān* adds, " You want to know this *Ātmā*, *Jñeyam*, to be known; He is far away for the one who does not know. He can go on searching. The searcher is the sought. For one who has a teacher, it is but near. This *Kṣetrajñaḥ* (knower of the world), *Jneyam* (to be known), is thus *Dūrastham ca antike ca tat*—far and near." See the wonder, you are undivided but look divided. You do not move at all but look as though moving. Thoughts are moving. It looks as though " I " moves. It remains everywhere. It is not isolated in a given place. This is what YOU really ARE. This is what you have to know.

MEANS OF KNOWLEDGE—VALUES OF LIFE

To know this *Puruṣa*, the limitless Awareness that you are, you must have *jñānam*. Kṛṣṇa calls ethical values *jñānam*;

these ethical values are necessary for the mind to be able to see the truth of yourself. Here the word *jñānam* is used in the sense of a means; it is resolved as *Jñāyate anena iti jñānam*—that by means of which "It" can be known is *jñānam*. Kṛṣṇa lists the values

Amānitvamadambhitvam ahimsā kṣāntirārjavam
Ācāryopāsanam śoucam sthairyamātma vinigrahaḥ.
(XIII-8)

Indriyārtheṣu vairāgyam anahankāra eva ca
Janma mṛtyu jarā vyādhi duḥkha doṣānudarśanam.
(XIII-9)

Asaktiranabhiṣvangaḥ putradāragṛhādiṣu
Nityam ca sama cittatvam iṣṭāniṣṭopapattiṣu.
(XIII-10)

Mayi cānanya yogena bhaktiravyabhicāriṇī
Vivikta deśa sevitvam aratirjana samsadi. (XIII-11)

Adhyātmajñāna nityatvam tatvajñānārtha darśanam.
(XIII-12)

An analysis of every one of these values leads to one value: to help the mind to remain quiet, to keep you with yourself. Any learning can take place only in a quiet, alert mind, and not in a mind buffeted by agitations. This is true of Self-knowledge also. So Kṛṣṇa enumerates these attitudes one must have as *jñānam* besides self-enquiry. *Amānitvam*—absence of pride: A man who has an exaggerated opinion of himself is called a *māni*. This attitude is *mānitvam*—pride. Absence of *mānitvam* is *amānitvam*. A proud one demands respect; he possesses some qualifications but expects others to recognize him. This is due to a sense of insufficiency with himself. One cannot be happy by demanding respect from others. One may be respected because of power, but it will disappear as soon as power goes away. Respect is to be commanded. If you are content with yourself, your happiness does not depend on whether others respect you or not. An attitude of humility helps one to retain a peaceful disposition of the mind.

Adambhitvam—unpretentiousness: One who does not have any qualification, but through speech, dress, activity, etc., will present himself as different from what he really is, is called a *dambhi*. The attitude is *dambhitvam* and its absence is *adambhitvam*. Presenting yourself other than what you are will present you only problems; if you keep on telling lies, you must remember all of them to prevent being caught on the wrong foot. If you speak truth, you need not pose like this. Owning up one's limitations and absence of desire to pose oneself differently is to be discovered. With this attitude one is free from problems caused by pretentions—one's mind is simple —simple to learn.

Ahimsā—noninjury: Never consciously injuring anybody, appreciative of the sanctity of life, one observes noninjury. One cannot create any life. For one's benefit one cannot hurt anybody, *kāyena vācā manasā*—by one's actions, or words, or even mind. One has to discover the attitude that respects another life. A man who is sensitive and considerate to himself will be sensitive and considerate to others. Noninjury can, therefore, be defined as appreciation of the rights and points of view of others, including the plant and animal kingdoms. In nature's creation life depends on life, but deliberate injury beyond one's minimum needs is *himsā*—injury.

Kṣānti—accommodation: Accommodate people. You want everybody to change so that you will be happy! Because you cannot accommodate the other fellow, you are not happy. People are all of different dispositions. You don't want fire to be cold or even a scorpion without a sting. You may keep away from them, but don't try to change them and then suffer because you cannot change them. If you can take things they are, there will be *śānti*—peace. This should be so even when it comes to your father, son or wife. You are different, but you want them exactly what you want them to be. It is not possible because everyone is having his own capacity and problems. If you understand this, ninty percent of your problems will be solved. Your heart must be commodious; otherwise

there will be no peace. Because of a person you cannot stand, you suffer. This is called lack of accommodation. Accept the person. If you can change, change the person. If you cannot, pray for his betterment. The world is wide enough to accommodate the other person; why should your heart be small?

Ārjavam—straightforwardness: Thought, word, and deed are in one line. There are no angularities in the personality. This alignment makes you straightforward.

Ācāryopāsanam—serving the teacher: I have to learn from the teacher, so I am ready to serve the teacher. My mind, sense organs, all I surrender to the teacher so that I can receive knowledge. This does not mean surrendering your intellect and blind acceptance of whatever is told. Thereby you lend yourself to be exploited by anyone. This represents the right attitude to the teacher.

S'aucam—purity: Inside and outside I am clean. My body is clean, my mind, my clothes, my house, all are clean. By being alert about myself, I keep my mind clean. I don't entertain any ill will. If jealousy occurs, I nip it in the bud. Thus I keep the mind clean.

Sthairyam—steadfastness: I am holding a post. I hold it like a sentry. Also, whatever is called upon me to be done, by my family or society, country or humanity, all these I do with a steady mind.

Ātma vinigrahaḥ—self-restraint: Mastery over my mind is called *śama*. Any thought occurs in my mind only with my knowledge. I am the master. I am not taken for a ride by my mind. This is called self-control.

Indriyārtheṣu vairāgyam—dispassion towards sense objects: I am not a slave to my sense organs. Anything that I see does not hook me. We all now fall for advertisements. Our tastes, likes, dislikes, all seem to be set by the media; we do not have the say. One must have the say and not the fancies of one's mind. One who is not led by one's sense organs or fancies of mind is having this *vairāgya*, dispassion towards the sense objects.

Anahamkāra—absence of egoism: Never think you have achieved anything all by yourself. A number of factors are responsible for any achievement. Recognition of this fact brings in an attitude of *anahamkāraḥ*, absence of egoism.

Janmamṛtyu jarāvyādhi duḥkha doṣānudarśanam—attitude to life: The born will die. Before death, old age, disease, are all there waiting if one lives long enough! There is no certainty when death will come. Appreciate the marvel that is life. In spite of all bugs in the stomach and all trucks on the street, one is alive! To be alive to the moment and make use of it, not letting it pass without one being wiser for that moment, takes a certain attitude. One has to discover this attitude by enquiry into the facts of life as lived in the world.

Asakti—freedom from ownership: You do not own anything. You may possess a few things in life and discover the right attitude to things you possess.

Anabhiṣvanga—detached care: The son, wife, family, all of them do require a certain amount of care. You don't own them; if you appreciate the fact that you only possess them temporarily, you will take good care of them. If a car of your friend is left under your care, you take better care of it than your own. You are only the managing trustee of this body of yours, your family, wife, son. . . .This attitude does not allow you even to commit suicide because you know that you do not own your body. Freedom from ownership is *asakti*; the resultant detached care is *anabhiṣvangaḥ*.

Samacittatvam—equanimity: An equal attitude towards good and bad, success and failure—the attitude of a *Karma Yogi*. Equanimity is called *Yoga*.

Avyabhicāriṇī bhaktiḥ—devotion to the Lord: Don't take anything, including the elements, for granted. In all these, see the Lord all the time. If you lose sight of Him, you will find your *ahamkāra*, ego, grow every day.

Vivikta deśa sevitvam—resort to a quiet place: Take stock of yourself, repair to a quiet place, pull back, pause and

see for a minute. This is possible if you throw yourself on your own lap for some time.

Aratih janasamsadi—absence of craving for company: Be with people, do not be afraid. But do not be after them. This is the right attitude. For the one who is after people, he is told to pull away, not to long for company, because company is another form of escape. Every escape is an omission of recognition of what you are. See that you can be happy without company.

Adhyātma jñāna nityatvam—study of the scriptures: *Vedānta* is *adhyātmajñāna*. May you study the *Gītā* every day. It is not a novel to read once. Do not give up the study. The more you keep in touch with this, the more you will be in touch with yourself, the beauty, the limitlessness that you are.

Tattva jñānārtha darśanam—see the truth of yourself: The truth, beauty, profundity, limitlessness is yourself. Keep that vision; in contemplation keep this; apreciate this in the seat of meditation.

You will find that if you are endowed with these, you have everything, so that you will discover yourself to be what you are seeking; what you ARE you will know.

Why Differences in Man?

THE CAUSE

The whole *Gītā* deals with knowledge, knowledge of *Brahman*; therefore, it is called *Brahma vidyā*. *Brahman* is the essential nature of the individual " I ", which is again the Lord, and which is also the whole creation. Unfolding this knowledge, the first six chapters of the *Gītā* deal predominantly with the individual. The second six chapters, dealing with *Īśvara*, ends with *bhakti*, devotion for the Lord. The last six chapters deal with the identity between *jīva* and *Īśvara*. In the thirteenth chapter we heard *Bhagavān* saying

Kṣetrajñam cāpi mām viddhi sarva kṣetreṣu bhārata.(XIII-3)

I am the one that is to be known. What is to be known is *Brahman*; that indeed is " I " in all bodies. The one who is aware of the body-mind complex and the world, that *Kṣetrajñaḥ* is *aham*, I. It is not isolated. In all beings, that conscious " I " is indeed myself. In the identity of the *Kṣetrajñaḥ* and *kṣetra*, the individual and the total are resolved. All other subsequent chapters sum up what has been told and the means of achieving this identity of *kṣetra* and *Kṣetrajñaḥ*.

THE THREE QUALITIES

In the next chapter *Bhagavān* talks of the various types of people. When the cause is the same, why should the effects be different? If everyone is born of that same *Brahman* with association of *māyā*, anything that is born of this *Puruṣa* and *prakṛti*, that is, *kṣetra* and *Kṣetrajñaḥ*, should be similar. How is this seen in creation? We find that though the cause

is common, the effects are dissimilar! Take the human being. His body-sense organ-mind complex is nothing but *prakṛti*—matter. This is vivified by *Caitanya*—consciousness, because this *prakṛti* is capable of reflecting consciousness. If so, why should one be contemplative, the other ambitious and the third dull? This is a relevant question. The fourteenth chapter of the *Gītā* accounts for the differences.

By observing what is there in creation we can appreciate the qualities of the cause of creation. By seeing the material, you can understand the effect—by examining cotton you can know the quality of the fabric. On this basis, the cause must have ingredients which can be brought under three heads. The *prakṛti* seems to have three ingredients, called *guṇaḥ*—qualities: *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*. These determine the psychological disposition of a given individual. This does not explain anything. If all are mixtures of these *guṇas*, why should there be differences? The physico-physio-psycho complex is made up of the three *guṇas* of *prakṛti* only. This complex is called ***kāryakaraṇa sanghāta***. Why should one be contemplative, another active, and the third generally inactive?

GUṆA-BASED CLASSIFICATION OF MAN

Bhagavān says man a mixture of the three; the predominance of one over the other two accounts for the dissimilarity. Suppose I say he is a man in whom *sattva* is predominant. This quality accounts for peace, knowledge, enquiry and thinking. If *sattva* is predominant, *rajas* is the second and *tamas* is the third, that man is called a contemplative person, called *Brāhmaṇa* by *guṇa*—quality, and NOT by birth. He is contemplative (*sattva*), sufficiently active (*rajas*), but he too yawns and goes to sleep (*tamas*)! He has *sattva guṇa pradhāna*, predominant quality of *sattva*.

Rajas accounts for activities: One who is hyperactive, ambitious, out to do something, who can be touched to the quick, he is predominantly *rajasic*. This one can be of two types. If the second place is occupied by *sattva*, he is thinking,

active, he is called *Kṣatriya* by quality. He will be wedded to an ideal. His activities will not be only self-centred, he will be helping the country. In the process he may win some laurels, but by his work the society will be benefited.

The other *rajasic* one is also active, but the second place is occupied by *tamas*, and *sattva* is in the third place. He will also be very active, he will be a businessman. Even a smile he gives to the customer he will add in the bill! He is called a *Vaiśya* by quality. He is selfish and, by his activity, he is subject to have sorrow and greed. All these qualities are accounted for by *rajas*.

There is a fourth one who is generally dull, only now and then active to satiate his urges. For such a one, the predominant quality is *tamas*. He is called a *S'ūdra* by qauality. These are the four types of people: *Brāhmaṇa*, *Kṣatriya*, *Vaiśya* and *S'ūdra*.

I am talking only of *guṇa*—qualitywise grouping, not of *karma*—dutywise grouping. These four kinds of people you will find all over the world, not only in India. Everyone is born *tamasic*; he slowly become *rajasic*, and then, when he knows more and more, he becomes *sāttvic*—he will be able to see in things more than what meets the eye. This capacity to go beyond the sense organs, this profundity if he sees in life, he is a contemplative *sāttvic* person. All are born *tamasic*. A newborn babe sleeps twenty hours a day. When he grows, he sleeps less and grows into sleeplessness. This is called maturity! If he does not abuse his intellect, he will grow into a sensitive person. He will cushion off experiences in life. Such a one is *sāttvic*, which everyone has to become. The one who gets up only for eating and goes to sleep afterwards has to become active first. Such a *tamasic*, dull one has to become *rajasic* —active; even if he is selfish, let him do something. Afterwards, this activity is to be converted to selfless activity. His activities are to be dedicated for a cause. In this process he becomes more and more *sāttvic*. In spite of all activities, he will discover that he is that *sannyāsī*, the actionless.

The three qualities constitute the disposition of everyone's *antaḥkaraṇa*—mind. Everyone is active, contemplative and dull now and then. The predominance of the three accounts for the peculiar disposition: contemplative, active or dull. An animal is predominantly *tamasic*, it is not thinking; it is led by instincts. Man is blessed with the faculty of reason, and because of this plus alone he is the roof and crown of creation. When this capacity is put to absolute use, he solves THE HUMAN PROBLEM; because, all problems are only problems of intellectual quests. These quests come to an end when he knows himself. Otherwise, there will be nagging problems inside despite all your achievements. As a child he had that quest; this quest will be quenched only when he knows " That ", knowing which all are as well known. In the fourteenth chapter, *Bhagavān* says all the three qualities are in any man. With the necessary attitude, *vicāra*, enquiry, and company of the good, he has to change. He will have a naturally contemplative mind, and he will reach Him though active. He will be understanding Him. Kṛṣṇa says

Nānyam guṇebhyaḥ kartāram
yadā draṣṭanupaśyati
Guṇebhyaśca param vetti
madbhāvam sodhigacchati. (XIV-19)

" The one who does not see a *kartā*, a doer, other than those *guṇas*, dispositions, the one who appreciates as the Self that which vivifies the mind enjoying these *guṇas*, he knows Me. " He knows that it is only these various types of mind that perform all these, that these are the work of *guṇas*. He is not subject to sorrow, not subject to delusion—the one who does not see himself under the spell of these *guṇas*. He knows he is the one because of whom these dispositions are lighted up. Again, *Param vetti guṇebhyaśca*—that one also knows that which transcends the *guṇas*, that stands as witness lighting up the *guṇas*, the mind. If the mind is restless or frightened, he does not say, " I am restless or frightened. " He does not take

himself to be a doer or enjoyer. These are conditions of the mind and "I am the theatre light, illumining everything. I am that light because of which this entire area of the theatre is lighted up."* In this way, one who knows, *Madbhāvam adhigacchati*—he reaches Me. He becomes one with Me. He knows he is the one who is indeed *Īśvara*, which is indeed the creation and also free from the creation. All these distinctions are apparent and he is the Truth. This chapter is called *Guṇa Traya Vibhāga Yoga*, a chapter dealing with the threefold qualities: *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*.

**Pancadasi*, ch. 10,

17(b)

The Tree of Samsāra

In the fifteenth chapter, Kṛṣṇa swallows all the apparent differences in creation which he carefully accounted for just before in the previous chapter. *Bhagavān* says in the beginning of this chapter

Ūrdhvamūlamadhaḥ śākham aśvattham prāhuravyayam
Chandāmsī yasya parṇānī yastam veda sa vedavit.
(XV-1)

This limited life of *samsāra*, the feeling " I am limited, the world limits me, " this *samsāra*, can be likened to a tree, a *puṇya Aśvattha* tree, which is like a banyan tree belonging to the class *Ficus religiosa*. The *Sanskrit* word *Aśvattha* means, that which will not be tomorrow. Tomorrow means in the future, a day when this tree won't be seen. It is considered to be a tree that outlives all other trees; even if the trunk goes, it will live! Though having a long life, it will still die one day. *Avyayam iti prāhuḥ*—they say it is a long-living tree; this is the tree of *samsāra* you talk about. This *samsāra* tree must have roots like any other tree. The roots of a tree we don't see, but we don't take the tree to be rootless because, without the roots the tree cannot stand; it is held by the roots to the earth. *Mūlam*, the taproot of the tree, is *Ūrdhvam*, *upari vartamānam*—it is beyond the scope of your immediate perception. This tree has its being in its root, the Awareness; therefore, it is not available for objectification. It is the subject by which you are aware of everything. It is not any of the known things; it is the nature of the knower, so *ūrdhva mūlam*. The root is above one's knowledge in the absence of this teaching. *Ksetra*, the field of experience, is its branches. Leaves are necessary for the tree to survive. The *samsāra* tree

lives by the leaves of *karma*. If you don't know yourself, you take yourself to be limited and you will do *karma* to become limitless, it will give you results—two types of results: results that you see and results that you do not see—*dṛṣṭam* and *adṛṣṭam*. It is said, *Prayojanam anuddiśya mandopi karmaṇi na pravartate*—even a fool does not perform actions without expecting the results. Every action is preceded, therefore, by desire. It is this desire that manifests as an overt action. Every action has an immediate visible result. Also it has a remote unseen result. An action becomes good or bad only because of the motive. Let us take the cases of a surgeon on whose operating table a patient dies, and a fellow who knifes a man to death. The mind that wielded the hand counts in determining the nature of action. The mind has a motive, and if that motive is to kill the person, the man is punished. The doctor has a motive to save the person, and that is why he removes his gloves and washes his hands off, even though the patient is dead. He is paid too. The other one, who knifed a man, when caught, has to pay for what he did. Thus action gains a quality—good, bad or otherwise—based only on the motive you entertain. That motive is subtle, unseen. Thus, any action which is a physicalized form of motive, need not have only a physicalized form of result, but a subtle result also. If the physical action yields a result, then motives too can produce a result which is subtle. This subtle result will naturally go to the one who entertained the motive. This result is called *adṛṣṭam*, invisible results which accrued to that *jīva*, individual, who had the motive. This is called *puṇya* and *pāpa*. A *karma* because of which I gain comforts, position, etc., is called *puṇya*. The other that is capable of giving me discomforts is called *pāpa*. The results of good and bad actions accrue to the individual who goes about doing the actions. Both of them are called *karma*—the cause for the future births. This *adṛṣṭam* is due to the very knowledge of cause-effect: If I do this, I will get this. This knowledge of effect and cause is the basis for any activity, the activity

producing results, the results again producing more births; thus the *samsāra* tree thrives and thrives. Hence, this knowledge of cause-effect is said to be the leaves which make the tree live. That is why it is said *Chandāmsi yasya parṇānī*—the various means and ends you know in this world and those given by the *Vedas*. *Yastam veda sa veda vit*—the one who knows the tree along with the root, that person knows the meaning of *Vedānta*.

Not only this, *Bhagavān* goes further

Adhaścordhvam pṛasṛtāstasya sākhāḥ
Guṇaḥ pravṛddhā viṣayapravālāḥ
Adhaśca mūlānyanusantatāni
karmānubandhīni manuṣyaloke. (XV-2)

Of the branches of the *samsāra* tree, some go up and some go down—some are becoming activities and some are unbecoming activities. These activities are *guṇa pravṛddhāḥ*—they are all posed by the types of disposition one enjoys. If he is *sāttvic*, his activity will be of becoming nature. If he is *rajasic*, the values and pursuits will be different. These pursuits are called branches in life.

Objects outside are called potential branches—*viṣayaḥ pravālāḥ*. In branches there are nodular buds or bulbs out of which new shoots will come. Thus objects which were never considered desirable by me suddenly crop up as objects of intense desire. Doing these various *karmas*, activities, the *jīva* gains good and bad results. Then a new body, new actions, new results, new bodies—this goes on and on. These various bodies are the secondary roots that make him bound to this earth. Though it is like this, don't think this has any intrinsic truth; if you analyze it, the whole tree disappears.

WHO IS THE SUBSTANCE BEHIND ANYTHING?

If we take a tree and ask why it is called a tree, the answer could be, "Because it has treeness." Then what is the locus on which the quality, treeness, resides? If you say it resides on

the tree, this results in the logical absurdity of mutual dependence. If treeness is an independent locus on which treeness depends, then is it a quality of that locus or not? The answer to this question will result in another logical defect of *regress ad infinitum*. Thus we find that no substance can be categorically defined. All the time one defines only qualities; never can a substance be defined. The substance is the very enquirer, everything else is not. So the Lord says

Na rūpamasyeha tathopalabhyate
nānto nacādir na ca sampratiṣṭhā
Aśvatthamenam suvirūḍhamūlam
asanga śastreṇa dṛḍhena chittvā. (XV-3)

The tree has no form, nor has it any beginning, end or middle. I see a tree; in the mind it is a tree-thought. What is that tree-thought? A thought that has tree as an object. What is inside the tree-thought? You remove the tree-form and the name tree from the thought; what will be there? Awareness will be there. If the name and form of the wave are gone, water alone will be there. Similarly, the tree-name and form are removed; what is, is Awareness. This applies to anything I see. If you press any thought, you end up in Awareness. If you remove from the pot-thought the pot-name and pot-form, Awareness alone is. The basis for all thoughts is thus only Awareness. Thus on enquiry all forms disappear. No object can stand enquiry—*Vicāram na sahate*. That is the nature of this *samsāra* tree. This is the peculiar *māyā*. This tree seems to affect you, make you sorrowful, limited; all that limits you is this tree which has no form! Hence Arjuna, *Asangaśastreṇa dṛḍhene chittvā tat parimārgitavyam*—the only way to cast off the limitation is, don't accept it as an existing tree. Begin to search for the tree, see the nature of the tree. You will find you withdraw from the tree, you will see there is no tree. This is called *asangaśastra*—the axe of detachment. Note that the detachment is not physical. If so, then you attribute a reality to the tree, and it will take you for a ride.

The detachment is by knowledge. Know yourself. Search for the root of the tree, that is yourself. When you get at the root, you see then that the tree disappears! Or, it becomes apparent. The wave, once it knows it is water, though it sees big and small waves, it has no problem of limitation. This is called reaching Me, Arjuna. This is easy if you have such qualities as

Nirmāna mohā jitasangadoṣāḥ
adhyātmanityā vinivṛtta kāmāḥ
Dvandvairvimuktāḥ sukha duḥkha samjñair
gacchantyamūḍhāḥ padamavyayam tat. (XV-5)

"Those who are free from pride, delusion, attachment, abide in themselves, free from desires, free from pairs of opposites like misery and happiness, etc.; they reach that end, the limitlessness."

These qualities are similar to those we have seen earlier in the thirteenth chapter as *jñānam*. *Amuḍhāḥ*, people who are no more deluded by this tree, those who know the structure of the tree, those who know the nature of the tree very well, they go to an end which never comes to an end, *pada*. What is that *pada*, end?

Na tadbhāsayate sūryaḥ na śaśānko na pāvakaḥ
Yadgatvā na nivartante taddāma paramam nama. (XV-6)

"Where the sun does not shine, nor the moon, where stars do not shine, fire does not shine, this is My abode. Once you go there, you will never come back."

By this, don't think it is a dark place, so dark that no one can get out! This is not the meaning. The sun shines, because of which objects shine, but in Me all objects shine, sun, moon, stars and all other sources of light shine. The sun is because my mind shines; the mind shines because I shine. I shine because I cannot but shine. "I" Awareness is the essence of thought. That shining everything shines after, it

is the light of all lights, *jyotir jyotiḥ*. Therefore, the sun does not shine there. Once you know yourself to be THAT, where is the question of return? Once knowing, he cannot become again ignorant. I am the sun, I am the whole creation, all are in me, I enter the earth, I nourish the earth, I bring out the plant kingdom. By that nourishing earth I nourish the plants. Even if you are a meat-eater, the animal that you eat picks up the nourishment from the earth alone. All these I am. Kṛṣṇa adds

Yadāditya gatam tejaḥ jagadbhāsayatekhilam
Yaccandramasi yaccagnau tattejo viddhi māmakam.
(XV-12)

Gāmāviśya ca bhūtāni dhārayāmyahamojasā
Puṣnāmi causadhīḥ sarvāḥ somo bhūtvā rasātmakaḥ.
(XV-13)

" Know that to be my light which shines in the sun lighting up the entire earth, which shines in the moon and is also the fire." "I enter the earth and by my power I sustain it. Being *soma*, I nourish all the plants." Not only am I the food but

Aham vaiśvānaro bhūtvā prāṇinām dehamāśritaḥ
Prāṇāpāna samāyuktaḥ pacāmyannam caturvidham.
(XV-14)

" The one who eats that food also am I. I am the one who makes you hungry. By being *prāṇa*—physiological system, I am *vaiśvānara*, your digestive fire. It is called fire because it burns the food. I abide in all beings as hunger and thirst; I eat food, I digest food. I digest the fourfold food." Food is classified, based on method of eating, as four-fold—*bhakṣyam*, *bhojyam*, *coṣyam* and *lehyam*—that which you masticate, that which you drink, that which you suck *, and that which you lick.† All types of food fall under these four heads. " If

* Mango, etc.
† Honey, etc.

I am the sun, moon, earth, plant, food, eater, disgestive fire, where are you, the so-called *jīva*?", the Lord asks. Furthermore

Sarvasya cāham hṛdi sanniviṣṭaḥ
mattasmṛtirjñānam apohanam ca
Vedaiśca sarvaiḥ ahameva vedyaḥ
vedāntakṛt vedavideva cāham. (XV-15)

" I am the one in all beings who is abiding in the heart as " I " Awareness. All beings are in Me. I am your mind, knowledge, memory —beyond Me, Awareness, where is the mind? I am the content of thought, whether it is knowledge or memories. Even your forgetfulness I am, because of whom you can say, ' I have forgotten.' Arjuna, you may search all words, scriptures. I am the one who has got to be known through all of them. I am *vedāntakṛt*—the teacher, who teaches the knowledge; I am the first *guru*. Because each teacher is the student, I am the first one. The knowledge comes from the Lord. If a thing is there, the knowledge thereof is not different from Myself, the object of which also is Myself. Anything one knows, I am. Once the student, *vedavit*, knows that " I am everything " as a result of the teaching, the student also is Myself."

Dvāvimau puruṣau loke kṣaraścākṣara eva ca
Kṣarassarvāṇi bhūtāni kūtasthokṣara ucyate. (XV-16)

Uttamaḥ puruṣastu anyaḥ paramātmetyudāhṛtaḥ
Yo lokatrayamāviśya bibhartyavyaya īśvaraḥ. (XV-17)

This entire creation, including the physical body, is *kṣaraḥ*, it is *prakṛti*, inert, subject to change. That because of which this world is born is called *Akṣaraḥ Puruṣa*, the Changeless Being. Only with reference to the changing world I am the Changeless Being. But in reality, with reference to my own Self, I am beyond these *kṣara* and *akṣara*, I am that *Puruṣottama*. I am the one that abides in all, called *Brahman*, which pervades all the three worlds, gross, subtle and causal.

The Threefold Qualities

UPĀDHI—LIMITING ADJUNCT

The nature of *Ātmā*, I, is Awareness, limitlessness—spacewise and timewise. It has no notion of lack or imperfection and, therefore, it is whole. All this is born of this alone; everything is in this very Awareness. If this is so, how come we have this difference between me and the chair on which I am sitting? If Awareness is all-pervasive, obtains in all objects, any object must enjoy the same Awareness and, therefore, every object must be an awareful object and not insentient. But I find many objects are insentient; only a few are sentient like a plant or animal or man. Some rudimentary awareness is there in the plant. In animals there is better awareness. Human beings enjoy this Awareness in full measure. Matter, on the other hand, is not Awareness. How come a stone or table are not awareful? The table is not conscious to protest, whatever is done to it. It seems to have no Awareness to be aware of more things on it. What brings about this difference?

The space enclosed by the pot looks as though conditioned; similarly, the limitless Awareness not divided by time and space stands as though divided. In the case of space, due to the adjunct called pot, space is as though divided. That which brings about this seeming limitation is called *upādhi*—limiting adjunct. That unconditioned space is seemingly conditioned to ten litres when it is contained in a ten-litre pot! This limitation is brought upon space due to the *upādhi* of the pot. This is not an intrinsic division because the very pot is in space. Therefore, space cannot be limited, though for practical purposes it is limited. It cannot hold more than ten litres of water. But what serves a practical purpose need not be true. This

ten-litre space is from the standpoint of the pot. In truth, space is not limited.

TWO *UPĀDHIS*—GROSS AND SUBTLE

Awareness that is limitless has a seeming limitation. This is wrought by an *upādhi*. In this *upādhi* we find two types, one made up of gross matter and the other of subtle matter. Let us take the case of light from an incandescent bulb. What is shining is tungsten wire; the electricity is converted in tungsten wire as light. What is manifest in tungsten wire is light energy. The energy is subtle. But we also know that the wire, matter, is but energy. This subtle energy is manifest as light when it flows through the gross matter. You can call energy as subtle matter or matter as grossified energy; it does not matter.

Other than Awareness, anything that is there is inert, *prakṛti* because there is only one source of Awareness. Thus energy also is inert, *prakṛti*. This *prakṛti* is again divided into two, *sthūla*—gross, and *sūkṣma*—subtle. In this subtle form of matter there is total reflection of this Awareness. If it is gross matter, there is no reflection of Awareness. Thus the subtle matter becomes sentient and the other inert. But the existence for both is the same Awareness alone. But one thing is different between inert and sentient, though both are inert matter: This physical body, when I am alive, though inherently inert, becomes capable of experiencing, and hence it is sensient. The same body, if dead, is fit only for vultures; there is no sentiency any more. The dead body is like any other matter, only inert matter. What really happened at death? You cannot say Awareness went away, because it is like saying space went away from Bombay to Delhi! *Akhaṇḍa Caitanya*—limitless Awareness, cannot go anywhere; so when a man is dead, you cannot say Awareness went away. What makes the body so awareful, THAT comes and goes away. Let us call that the subtle body, which also is matter, but subtle, capable of reflecting Awareness. A mass of iron can become red-hot

due to fire; you say iron burns because fire is very much with iron. Fire and iron are together, not like one sitting on the other. There is no sacrament to bring them together. Fire is all over the iron ball; every atom of iron is blessed by fire; it is aglow. Heat and brilliance are the nature of fire. Iron, being a good conductor, is able to reflect all qualities of fire. So it is as good as fire.

Similarly, here too, my mind is able to be conscious of and it can make the sense organs shine, each illumining an object—forms, tastes, smells, sounds, and touch. I am sentient because I am identified with this body and sense organs. That fellow, "I", is called *sūkṣma śarīra*—subtle body. The difference among beings is wrought only by the differences in this subtle body. The combination of subtle body and gross matter of the physical body makes a living being. It is the presence of this subtle body which makes the physical body alive, and in its absence the body is dead. Suppose a man has gone to bed and does not get up in the morning. I go to wake him up; he does not respond. There is no pulse, no breathing; the doctor says he is dead. The subtle body has gone from the tenement of the gross physical body. He is no more there to react; there is no more likes and dislikes. The tenant has left the tenement. When the subtle body is, we say he is alive; if it has departed, we say he is dead. The structure, anatomy, and the subtle body determine the being. Mere calcium carbon, iron, phosphorous that make up the structure, called anatomy, will not make him a vivified being. Awareness, reflected in the subtle body, vivifies him. The physiological system is called *prāṇas: prāṇa*—respiration, *apana*—excretion, *samāna*—digestion, *vyāna*—circulation, and *udāna*—that which throws up, the reverse motion. When a man dies, all these also pack up along with the sense organs and organs of action. The five *prāṇas*, organs of perception and organs of action, and the mind constitute this subtle body.

But the common factor for a living being or an existent thing is existence, IS. The manifest Awareness brings about the

difference between an inert object and a sentient being. Therefore, the subtle body makes the difference. If I heat water, it has the heat of fire but not the brilliance of fire. Water is not capable of manifesting the full nature of fire like the iron ball. In table, chair, etc., the subtle body is not there. Awareness is not manifest. In me it is manifest because the subtle body is still there. If the subtle body is not there, you can say the body is dead. In death, it is consciousness conditioned by the subtle body which goes. This is what is called *jīva*, which moves according to *karma*. This is the one that has *karma* which accounts for the different bodies. If this subtle body is introduced in the table, it will become awareful. If it has the mind to think, it will be a freak or a man! Even if it is a little pup, it has Awareness manifest in it. I cannot bang it; it will run away. It wants to live. A human being is one who enjoys an evolved mind capable of thinking, knowing, enjoying the faculty of choice. Therefore, he has got to know what is right and wrong.

PROGRAMMING, VALUES AND VIRTUES

Here comes the sixteenth chapter. If you can be a human being, you can be divine or demoniac, all with the mind you have. Nobody is born a demon; everyone is born innocent, with a pure mind without even knowing good and bad. But he has the mind potentially capable of knowing, analyzing and assimilating experiences. This is an inbuilt capacity. This human being is only programmed to think and know independently; he is not TOTALLY programmed. Animals are programmed and subject to further programming. A gorilla can be made to drive a motorcycle, but it will not get down and ask for a Coke, and get back the change! It is still a programmed gorilla. It is man's capacity to think, to analyze, to conclude, that is, to know. This capacity is inbuilt in the human. He is not therefore programmed: that he is born, may be programmed; that he has got this constitution or allergy may be programmed, say, due to *karma*. Thus some

events in life can be due to *karma*-programming. But definitely your thinking is not programmed. If so, no learning is possible.

But man can subject himself to any kind of programming; therefore, he does not know what he is. He can condition himself to thinking that he alone is right, he may become an idealist, can even destroy society for the sake of his ideal! Any fanatic is like this. He has bartered his reason at the altar of a programming. He can be indoctrinated. Or, he can keep reason on its toes. A man who does not make judgement of people, one who can learn from life, he alone is alive; the other, the concluded person, is dead. That faculty of reasoning, thinking, if it is kept always in a fluid state, ready to give up and absorb, that person will become divine, *Bhagavān* says. For he will see that each passing experience educates him.

In the beginning, I am subject to programming by mother, father, teacher, society. . .because I have not developed reason. I know that I should respect the wise, the elders; should not steal, should not lie. These were told to me as values once; I did not appreciate them at that time. I followed the rules because I was so told. I obliged my father, mother, religion, State; in all my lifetime I obliged. That is, I was doing what my mother told me, or the scripture or my granny told me. At that time I was good because I could not be bad. Once grown up, I can think independently and I must assimilate what is right and wrong. If it is not assimilated properly, I cannot be obliging all the time; if it is thought inconvenient, I will give up these values. The values are: Speak the truth, follow the path of righteousness; respect your parents and teacher; do not do bad deeds; do not drink alcohol; do not eat meat; do not harm any being. . . .All these are told in the scriptures. In addition we have civil and criminal laws. I think I am obliged to the State or parents or religion or society, and obey them. I offer prayer because I am told. I will go to the church on Sundays because I am asked. Thus every time if I am obliging, the day of compromise is not

far away. An occasion will come in life when I will break all these. I will say, "To hell with all these. All say this, but I find the good fails and bad man enjoys." I will cast all these values to the winds. This will happen when the values remain only as values; they are a sort of programming and cannot become assimilated virtues.

Suppose you are hungry for ten days. Can you pick up food from the garbage? You cannot. You cannot throw away this principle of hygiene not because you are obliging the health department by adopting the principle of hygiene. It has become an assimilated value. Similarly, speaking truth, not harming anybody. . .these must be assimilated. He speaks truth and does not harm, not due to a value, but because it is his nature. That person, *Bhagavān* says, is divine and he has *daivīsampat*. If you don't assimilate a value, you are only obliging a value. He is good because he cannot be bad. This sort of person does not have *daivīsampat*. All the qualities like *amānitva*, told before in the thirteenth chapter, are retold in the sixteenth chapter in a different way.

I speak the truth not because somebody told me. If I tell a lie, I split myself into two parts. When I speak, I am an actor. When I think, I am a thinker. Between thinker and actor I am creating slowly a gulf. So a time will come when I will think of doing something, but there is no one to carry out the action! That is why you decide to get up early but cannot get up the next day. The poor mind takes on the suggestion, it wakes you up even before the alarm, but when it rings, you bang it and go to sleep. Why? The thinker is different from the actor. This is due to the split. Thus a man becomes a Dr. Jeckyl and Mr. Hyde. Good thoughts are there but, when it comes to action, it is all a mess. Good intention alone is not enough. As an actor, he cannot express properly. This is due to the gap between thinker and doer. You cannot achieve anything even here; the Lord will be too far away!

Let us take a value, say *ahimsā*—noninjury: I must assimilate *ahimsā*. I want to live and live happily. But my neigh-

bour also wants to live and live happily. Therefore, he does not want me to injure or hurt him. I also want the same thing from him. This is commonsense, this is the basis for all *dharma*. This is what Vyāsa says in the *Mahābhārata*—What you do not want from him, do not do unto him; what you want from him, do unto him. This is the basis for all value structure. I don't want anyone to hurt me. I don't want to hurt anyone. In this manner one develops the sensitivity to be aware of others' needs as he is aware of his own needs. He is not a saint, but one who lives a human life. That person is called the one who has all riches, *daivīsampat*, attributes that anybody can have, and those virtues take him to liberation. Such a sensitive mind who cannot harm a man, not because he is incapable but because he is sensitive, he alone can gain liberation.

If you follow one value to the full, all other values come along, like, if you pull one leg of the cot, all others will come. Though many values are told, any one will cover all others. These are not to oblige some, but to oblige yourself. You prove to be a human being—by this you become divine! Because all others have *asura bhāva*—demoniac qualities:

Dambho darpo'bhimānaśca
krodhaḥ pāruṣyameva ca
Ajñānam cābhi jātasya
pārtha sampadamāsurīm (XVI-4)

Ostentation, arrogance, self-conceit, ignorance and harshness belong to this state. Also

Āḍhyo'bhi jānavānasmi ko'nyosti sadṛśo mayā
Yakṣye dāsyāmi modiṣya ityajñāna vimohitāḥ. (XVI-15)

They think, "Who is there equal to me? I am rich. I am most successful. See me." One who has *ahāmkāra*—ego, like this, he is an *asura*—a demon. *Asura* means not the one with canine teeth, but behind a nice form he can be all vulgarity and all bad—only wrong, false values motivate him to act.

One's personality is nothing but what one's value structure is. Taller your claims, greater your ignorance because, you depend upon so many for what you are. If one does not appreciate this, one is only an *asura*.

If you are proud, there is another equally proud one, and when these two *asuras* come, there will be only rub and problem. If *asuras* populate the earth, there can be no life; only destruction will be left. For, to be a man he must necessarily assimilate the moral and ethical values. When he begins to mature, he must start assimilating values. He should give thought to them. He should think, "Why should I follow *satyam vada*—speak truth?" Before you throw away a value, think, examine and see if there is any worth. Then you may use it or give it up. Lots of values have been told. Whether it is by religion, scriptures, by father or mother, all talk only of ethics. You want all others to follow these values so that you can exploit them! You throw away the values without knowing them, or they get themselves ejected out because you have not assimilated them; they are only floating in your mind, so they get thrown off. Once you grow old, they do not stick with you. As a child they were adorning you, now they do not because you have not assimilated them. Examine each value and assimilate. Do not throw the baby with the bath water. This will make you a human. You are not obliging God or anybody but yourself. It is easy to relate to a human, and these values make you a human. No one is able to relate to him who is like a tiger, a cat, a donkey, a scorpion, a cobra, all in one. You cannot relate to him because he does not know what he will be at different times. All these animal instincts seem to have come along with man. A pouncing tiger is not bad because pouncing is its nature. It is acting according to its instincts. If a man does it, if his flesh brings along with it the animal instinct and he is unable to check it, it is because he has not assimilated the ethical and moral values. Hence *Bhagavān* says these values are *daivīsampat* for *mokṣa*. Others are for *bandha*—bondage. Kṛṣṇa says

Daivī sampat vimokṣāya nibandhāyāsurī matā
Mā śucaḥ sampadam daivīm abhijātosi pāṇḍava.

(XVI-5)

Understand, Arjuna, these divine attributes we talk of, attributes that make you human, are the means for discovering freedom. If man has these values, he will become naturally calm, his mind will be abiding, freed from likes and dislikes. That mind can own up all fullness, freedom, joy, all that he is fundamentally interested in achieving, true to the teaching. You have these qualities.

THREEFOLD *S'RADDHĀ*

Then begins the seventeenth chapter. Here Arjuna asks a question: Suppose if man worships, but not according to what is stipulated in the scriptures, what will happen to him? *S'raddhā* is a certain acceptance pending confirmation. Till you discover, you have faith and go about doing actions as enjoined. Till you begin to see the truth of the *Gītā*, you have *śraddhā*. To have faith in the words of the teacher and the scripture is *śraddhā*. Supposing one has *śraddhā*, but does not follow properly the method of worship, what will happen to him? This is the question by Arjuna. *Bhagavān* brings here a full chapter.

S'raddhā is three-fold—*sattvic*, *rajasic* and *tamasic*. Even from the prayers one does, even in one's choice of the altar, you can decide what kind of *śraddhā* one has. The one who has some kind of spirits as God, who goes to the cremation ground and does some prayers to destroy others, has only *tamasic śraddhā*. Or, one wants to become powerful and one is worshipping to gain that end; one wants to be greater than the other fellow. He will do *ghora tapas*—severe penance, for getting small things in life. Nobody did *tapas* as Rāvaṇa, but he still was only a *rākṣasa*—a demon, the *tapas* did not change him! This is called *rajasic śraddhā*. If you do anything for purifying the mind, you change. In fact, for

any ritualistic worship that is done in Hinduism, there is a *sankalpa*. Before you start the worship, you say, "I have gathered knowingly and unknowingly plenty of sins. For the elimination of them, the likes and dislikes, purification of my mind, and for gaining the grace of the Lord, I am doing this action. By this the Lord will abide in my heart. Though He is there, and I don't see Him, I can come to see Him." This is *sāttvic sraddhā*. *Bhagavān* adds, "Arjuna, everything can be divided into three types."

Yajnas tapas tathā dānam teṣām bhedamimam śṛṇu.
(XVII-7)

"May you listen to the different types of ritual, penance and charity."

All are three-fold: gift is three-fold; *tapas* is three-fold. If the mind is silent, one does *mānasa tapas*. Keeping the mind pleasant, alert, is indeed a *tapas*. If the words are true, not harsh, carry some profundity, meaning, it is oral *tapas—vāk tapas*. If I follow some control over my sense organs, keeping the place clean, body and clothes clean, that is called bodily *tapas*.

One who has something to give is a rich man, and not the one having money. However much one may have, he is only a poor man who does not want to give. If one has only one rupee, and he gives this away to a needy person, he is a rich man. The man who does not barter this freedom for money, he alone is rich. The more you are able to give, the richer you are. If riches keep you under, you are not rich. Therefore *Bhagavān* says, *Dātavayam iti yat dānam*—what is to be given, you give. Don't think about it. You wash your hands off and do not remember. A gift is a gift if the other is blessed by receiving it, and it does not make him feel obliged. Thus when you give, please see that the person deserves the gift. You don't give to a drunkard who will only drink it away. That kind of gift is *sāttvika dānam*. If you give with a cameraman around, this is *rājasa dānam*. The fellow who invests

his charity for gaining his ends is only *rajasic*. The *tāmasa dānam* is charity done to destroy others. Not knowing what for and to whom he is giving, he gives; such a kind of *dāna* is *tāmasa*.

Those values which you have not only heard but have come to assimilate, they are *sāttvika* values. They will make you a *sāttvic* person, a person who is naturally contemplative. That naturally contemplative person alone will own Me. I abide in all as *pūrṇa*—fullness. In Me everything is. You and I are not different at all. This discovery becomes clear as daylight for the one whose mind is mature, simple, cool, rich, accommodative and ready to accept limitations, not for a mind that is diplomatic or cunning. Such a mind is not away from Me; I am that mind. Since that mind has nothing to long for or hate, it is abiding. It will see the Truth of what is being told. He can discover, "I am *Sat Cit Ānanda*."

What is Renunciation?

The last chapter of the *Gītā* sums up all that was said by the Lord in sixteen chapters. This chapter also begins with a question by Arjuna. He wants to know again what is *sannyāsa* and *tyāga!* That is indeed the topic of the whole *Gītā*. At the end, instead of asking as before what is superior *karma* or *sannyāsa*, he wants to know what is the nature of *sannyāsa* and *tyāga*. Both mean renunciation. *Bhagavān* uses all over the *Gītā* these two words. Sometimes he uses *tyāga* as *sannyāsa*, and sometimes He uses them differently. So he asks for this knowledge.

TYĀGA—RENUNCIATION

Bhagavān tells him *tyāga* is *karma phala sannyāsa*—giving up of the fruit of actions. *Karma phala tyāga* is otherwise called *Karma Yoga*. I do this action because it has to be done by me. I do expect the result; nobody can do without expecting the result. What is said as *karma phala tyāga* is that the result is not affecting me as I have the right attitude. While performing action, I appreciate myself as one who is placed in a situation to act, and therefore I act. Even a *kāmya karma*—a desire-prompted action, can be *Yoga* if I have the right attitude to the result. Results, as they come, I receive them in the form of *prasāda* from Him. I have not created the laws; I get results due to laws. He shapes them and so I take it as *prasāda*. *Prasāda* means glad acceptance, and my likes and dislikes are neutralized. This is *karma phala tyāga* —renouncing the fruits of action.

SANNYĀSA—RENUNCIATION

Sannyāsa does not mean mere giving up of *karma*. There are three types of *sannyāsa*. One is called *āpat sannyāsa*, the other is *vividiṣā sannyāsa*, and the third is *vidvat sannyāsa*—one becomes a renunciate while one is in mortal danger, or when one has desire to know the truth of himself, or when one is already a wise man. The *āpat sannyāsī* is he who gives up, renounces everything when he is going to die; when the doctors have given up, he wants to give up! There are four *āśramas*—stages in life: *brahmacarya*, *gṛhastha*, *vānaprastha*, and *sannyāsa*—the student, householder, forest dweller, and renunciate. Each Hindu is supposed to go through the four stages. The man who is about to die chooses to take *sannyāsa* so that if there is any benefit by taking *sannyāsa*, it also can come to him! He is lifted from his house and placed in a cottage. When he dies, he will be buried instead of cremated with the usual rites. It is called *āpat sannyāsa*, we may say *sannyāsa* in danger—it is a dangerous *sannyāsa!* When such a one gets up and recovers from the illness, he does not know what to do! He still has a lot of problems, is full of likes and dislikes; he cannot leave his house or wife; thus *sannyāsa* itself is in danger because of his unprepared mind.

The second type of *sannyāsa* is called *vividiṣā sannyāsa*. It is the contention between *vividiṣā sannyāsa* and *Karma Yoga* that is talked of all through the *Gītā*. *Vividiṣā* means desire to know. He wants to know. He is not interested in things in this world or the other worlds like heaven; he takes *sannyāsa*. This taken *sannyāsa*, *Bhagavān* comments, is also dangerous because it may not be natural; the taken one may not be the real one. One is not yet a real renunciate; but only willing to give up. Such a man can still have a value in his mind. He will be only a *nyāsī*. It is dangerous to take this.

RASA—TASTE

Viṣayā vinivartante nirāhārasya dehinaḥ
Rasa varjam . . . (II-59)

For such a man, all objects he desired go away because he has renounced. But his value for them will still remain. This value is two-fold—intellectually estimated value, and a habitual value. Not knowing the value of a thing, if I develop a subjective value, it is a false value. It can be known as a false value by knowing the real nature of the object. If I give for an object only what it deserves, and do not emphasize a value that it does not have, there will be no more subjective value; its objective value alone remains. Gold has an objective value. In a way it is definite. If you have got a special value for a wedding ring, for YOU it is very precious. This value does not belong to gold. You attribute an extra value of sanctity, but it does not belong to gold. This value is imposed upon it; it is not a quality of that object. This envisioned value is called subjective value. It is the creation of the spinning mind, *jīvasṛṣṭi*. If that mind enquires about the objects and appreciates the objects as they are, objectively, because of this appreciation its subjective values disappear. This is what happens when you study the *Gītā*. You have reversed your estimation about things. If still you are after those things, it is called a habitual value.

An alcoholic who knows that drinking is bad, though once he would never have thought about it like this, still cannot be without it because it has a habitual value. Due to habit, he is helpless. That it what *Bhagavān* says by *rasa varjam*—leaving behind the taste. This *rasa* can be either an intellectual value or a habitual value.

Bhagavān says mere renunciation will not make you a *sannyāsī*. Also, you cannot be a *Karma Yogi* while being a *sannyāsī*. A *sannyāsī* has no *karma* enjoined for him. He can perform only those few *karmas* enjoined for a *sannyāsī*; he cannot start a business or get married! He cannot start actions that he has already given up without creating confusion in the society. At the same time, he cannot be a *sannyāsī* as he has a large stock of likes and dislikes. So, neither can he be a renunciate, nor a householder; he is a *ubhaya-bhraṣṭa*, neither here nor there. Arjuna, therefore you better

be a *Karma Yogi*. If I am afraid of a field and therefore I want to get out, in the same field I must continue, and grow out of it. This is the *Gītā*.

Taking *sannyāsa* is getting away from the field by your own volition. There is a hope, expectation, that once you get rid of this world you can meditate. If you want to quit because you think the world is too much with you, be in the world, prove yourself as a man, see that the world cannot hook you any-more. If the world can frighten you, you are already swayed by the world. You created by yourself a monster of the world, for which it is not intended. If you feel it is a trap, it catches you, something must be wrong with you. When you accuse the world, three fingers are pointing at you. Better check your-self because the world does not seem to make the other fellow unhappy. Perhaps your unhappiness is due to your own creation. It is a projection of the mind. The world is not meant to produce sorrow; it is only meant to produce experiences for you. Out of those, if you get sorrow, the problem is yours and not of the world. If you think that by getting away to the Himalayas you can solve the problem, you will become lonely there. You will spoil with your *sannyāsa* the world and the Himalayas! You lose the chances of being a renunciate or being in the world. If you are not ready, you will still be hooked. A bad tooth converts food to poison. Your mind makes your life a sad affair.

SADNESS IS WORKED UP

Everybodv says that he is sad. Reasons differ, but sorrow is the same. One says, "I am poor, I cannot have salt for my gruel, so I am sorrowful;" the other says, "I am having milk, but I don't have sugar for it, therefore I am sorrowful." Another says, I don't have a pair of shoes, so I am sorrowful," and a fourth adds, "I am sorrowful because my palanquin has no cushion on it." This is an old Tamil verse. In sadness there is no salt or sugar or shoes or cushion. Sadness is the same. A beggar who has lost the begging bowl, if he gets it

back, he will be happy. A king who has lost his kingdom is not going to be happy by getting a begging bowl! Sadness is the same, but to remove it, the *nimitta*, cause, is different. If both become happy, in that happiness too there is no difference. Sorrow is due to mental projection. So *Bhagavān* gave Arjuna a re-education. He says, "All that you have got is only information, but you have not learned in life. Though you are a master in warfare, logistics, archery, dance and music, one thing you don't have. This particular education makes a sorrowful life a happy one." That is why *Bhàgavān* began his teaching with "*Aśocyān anvaśocastvam*—you are aggrieved for no reason." Even psychologically speaking, sorrow is not good for you. There is no legitimate cause for your sorrow. It is only your own makeup. You have to work for sorrow; it does not happen. By mere occurrence of death you don't become sorrowful; only after the news sinks into you, sorrow slowly develops; hearing the news you get only a shock. Like jealousy and other emotions, sorrow also is a built-up one. As we have seen already, what is innate in yourself is happiness. Since you do not want sorrow, it is not natural. If it is natural, you will be happily sorrowful. Because you want to get rid of it, and as it can be shaken off, it does not belong to you. Though it looks as if happiness comes and goes, it does not. When I don't spin thoughts, I am happy. What is natural is happiness. All this has been explained. If this world makes you sorrowful, you cannot run away from it. It is not going to help you; you will still be sorrowful. No one can give up the world totally as long as one is alive. What He said in the third chapter

Na hi kaścit kṣanamapi jātu tiṣṭhatyakarma kṛt

(III-5)

"No one can remain without activity even for a second." He again repeats it here as

Na hi dehabhṛtā śakyam
tyaktum karmāṇyaśeṣataḥ

Yastu karmaphalatyāgī
sa tyāgītyabhidhīyate. (XVIII-11)

It is possible to give up various actions, but not all actions. If he gives up all actions totally, he will be dead. Therefore, *tyāga* means do *karma* and have *karma phala tyāga*—take results as they come. This itself makes a lot of difference; your likes and dislikes get neutralized. You give yourself a field to express, and in time your mind is pure.

KṚṢṆA'S TEACHING

At the end *Bhagavān* says

Sarvaguhyatamam bhūyaḥ sṛṇu me paramam vacaḥ
Iṣṭosi me dṛḍhamiti tato vakṣyāmi te hitam. (XVIII-64)

" Now, at the end, I am giving you the essence of all I have said, because you are My most beloved, for whom I have great love; not only are you My friend, now you are My disciple. All that I have said before, I am going to tell you again. In the ninth chapter I told you the *rāja guhyam*, the king among secrets. I told of various other secrets about life, and all these I have already unfolded for your appreciation. But now I am going to conclude; I am going to bring this again into your focus. This is exactly all that I have got to say. What I am going to tell you is most *hitam*. I know you have understood Me, but here again I am summing it up because you may have missed the important thing." Let the vision be not lost sight of in the maze of words. The important message has to be stressed all along. Like the vulture which, though flying high, has its eyes glued on to the prey on the ground, the teacher will have his eyes on the point of teaching; though he may go all over, he will land on the truth again and again. That is what *Bhagavān* does. He can say if the student has understood or not from His eyes. He knows that words have gone home. With the confidence of a good teacher knowing the student, just before this verse, He gives Arjuna a blank cheque, asking him to do whatever he wants. He says

Iti te jñānamākhyātam guhyādguhyataram mayā
Vimṛśyaitadaśeṣeṇa yathecchasi tathā kuru. (XVIII-63)

" I have given you the knowledge, nothing is left out; you see what I have said to you and do whatever you like. If you want to go away, fine. If you know you are not an actor and do the action, or, you want to lead a life of *Karma Yoga*, it is also fine." This He says because He knows very well that Arjuna has understood. That is the confidence of the teacher. In fact, Arjuna's action is spontaneous.

Having said this much, He adds, " Now please listen. For your appreciation I sum up the whole thing:

Manmanā bhava madbhakto madyājī mām namaskuru
Mamevaiṣyasi satyam te pratijāne priyosi me. (XVIII-65)

Ye shall reach Me, *satyamte pratijāne*—I promise you. He says, "I promise you, take this from Me, it is all truth. Ye shall reach Me." How? "*Manmanā bhava*—may you become one whose mind is ever in Me. All your actions, your problems, let them be directed to Me. Never lose sight of Me. In all actions discover Me."

You have come to this world which is already there before you came. Suppose you entered into a guest house which is like a five-star hotel. You do not take a truckload of things. You go with a briefcase. You don't have any apprehension about the bed or food. You know you will be taken care of. You find everything is there. All that you have to do is to make use of them. Make your life comfortable. Learn and make use of all comforts that are there. All are provided in this all-star guest house of the world. Because a thing is not needed for you, you cannot call it redundant; it will be made use of by others. In all these, you don't lose sight of the benevolent host. In the entire creation, in the beautiful flowers or lakes, I see only Him. Your thanks go to Him who made all this. When you go, leave it as it was. You did not possess anything, nor do you pick up things along with you and go. The world is meant for others to come. It is meant for you as long

as you stay. Make your stay a pleasant one. Leave with pleasant memories.

Please appreciate this. We come to this world with a briefcase of the physical body. You came without a string on but with a wondrous briefcase; though you come with a small body, you grow, your sense organs work, you grow in maturity too. You need not bring with you oxygen cylinders or tons of food. This world is an all-star guest house. Look up, what a beautiful false ceiling, with colours that always change! I come with my eyes, I see a riot of colours. I come with ears, the world has sounds: symphonies are there. The nose I come with, and I find jasmine and rose. The sense of touch and tongue I come with, to find objects and tastes. Everything is meaningful. There are things beyond my sense organs which I discover with my intellect. If in this guest house one thinks one is sad, it is a mistake. Therefore *Manmāna bhava* —appreciate Me in all your perceptions. Thereby *Mat bhakto bhava*—may you be My devotee. Don't be a spasmodic and sporadic devotee with bouts of devotion. That I see is a blessing; that objects are there to see is another blessing; thus *Mat bhakto bhava*. Don't go in and fall at the feet of this or that altar. This is not something to feel devotional, but something to discover like a scientist discovering a fact. Let Me be the altar to place your head. This kind of attitude is *Karma Yoga*; this will make you a *sannyāsī*. And you will reach Me. If you know what you are, you are a *sannyāsī*. Therefore

Sarvadharmān parityajya māmekam śaraṇam vraja
Aham tvā sarvapāpebhyo mokṣayiṣyāmi mā ṣucah.
(XVIII-66)

This is the last verse Kṛṣṇa utters. "*Sarva dharmān*. . . . giving up all actions by the body, speech, and mind." Here *dharma* is *karma* because *karma* alone, depending upon its nature, becomes *dharma* or *adharma*—good or bad. "Giving up all these, come to 'Me'. But how is it possible? You

yourself told me before that it is not possible for anyone to give up all activities." "You need not give up any action because you have never done any action! Understand that you ARE actionlessness. This is the only way you can give up all actions." While doing action, discover you are actionlessness.

I am the presence in whose presence all actions take place. The sense organs do all actions like seeing, going, coming, taking, talking .... But discover yourself as actionlessness; this is real *sannyāsa*. It is called *naiṣkarmya siddhi*—actionlessness. What has to be done, you do with the *Yoga* attitude; you will reach Me. I am the one who abides in all beings, in whom all beings abide. I am *Sat Cit Ānanda*. You come to appreciate Me this way, then I will manifest to you. You once did action with the attitude of *kartā*—doer. I am the *Kṣetrajña* abiding in you. I am that Awareness in you. Once you come to appreciate Me in this manner, I will release you. I shall liberate you from all sins because YOU never performed any action. That you I am. You think you are an actor and you are going to give up actions. You have already committed a mistake of taking yourself as an actor. If you do action with *Yoga*, you can discover yourself as actionlessness. *Māśucaḥ*—please have no grief.

Kṛṣṇa said in the beginning, *Aśocyān anvaśocastvam* (II-11) —you grieve over things that deserve no grief. Here he ends with a statement, *Mā śucaḥ*—please have no grief. Thus the beginning and end mark Kṛṣṇa as a master teacher. He made a statement that Arjuna is grieved for no reason. He unfolded the truth; He proved that there is no reason to grieve and, therefore, He concluded with the statement, "Dont' grieve!"

ARJUNA'S RESPONSE

Arjuna, in response to the teaching, said

Naṣṭo mohaḥ smṛtirlabdhā tvat prasādānmayācyuta
Sthitosmi gatasandehaḥ kariṣye vacanam tava.

(XVIII-73)

" *Naṣṭo mohaḥ*—there is no more delusion. Once I did not know what was right and wrong; I was deluded. Now those foggy thoughts floating in the mind are gone. I have got back to myself, *smṛtir labdha*—I have seen the vision of myself; I know I am full. I had such an experience of fullness before only in moments of happiness. I never knew that I am seeing myself as I am. Now I know I am happiness. I know I am free from longings, cravings, likes and dislikes, and desire to be different. I thought that I was happy, under conditions for which I was not responsible. Now I know; you have made me see it very clearly. What was once a momentary experience, it is now an abiding knowledge. My ignorance is gone! He adds, *tvat prasādāt*—because of your grace I have gained all this, O Lord! Therefore, I am now firm on my feet, stand where I should, doubts have gone away from me. You have cleared them all. I will do what you said, what you told me before—'Therefore, Arjuna, fight.' I will act; I know I am not the slayer, I am not the slain. Never performing action, I am happily seated in this body. Therefore, I take my *Gāṇḍīva*. Dhṛtarāṣṛṭra is going to see what is going to happen. Let *dharma* be established."

CONCLUSION

Now Sanjaya says

Yatra yogeśvaraḥ kṛṣṇo yatra pārtho dhanurdharaḥ
Tatra śrīrvijayo bhūtir dhruvā nītirmatir mama. (XVIII-78)

" Where Arjuna is with *Gāṇḍīva* in hand, where the Lord Kṛṣṇa is behind, that is, where there is knowledge, attitude and action, for that person are *śri*, *vijaya*, *bhūti*—wealth, victory and glory. This is my *matiḥ*—conviction." What is to be done will be done. Everything will come to him. This is indeed the message of the *Gītā*. Sanjaya said, " Lord, what a wondrous discourse I had. Hearing this again and again, my hair stands on end. O King, this dialogue will shine through all posterity. It will never become obsolete.

This has relevance in everyday life." Thus Sanjaya feels that he was the most lucky. Arjuna, of course, was very happy. With this the *Gītā* comes to an end.

Om S'āntiḥ S'āntiḥ S'āntiḥ!



